# CHICAGO LEDGER

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## THE ALL-MYSTERY NUMBER

The Year's Most Notable Issue of the Ledger, presenting:

## "The Million Dollar Suitcase"

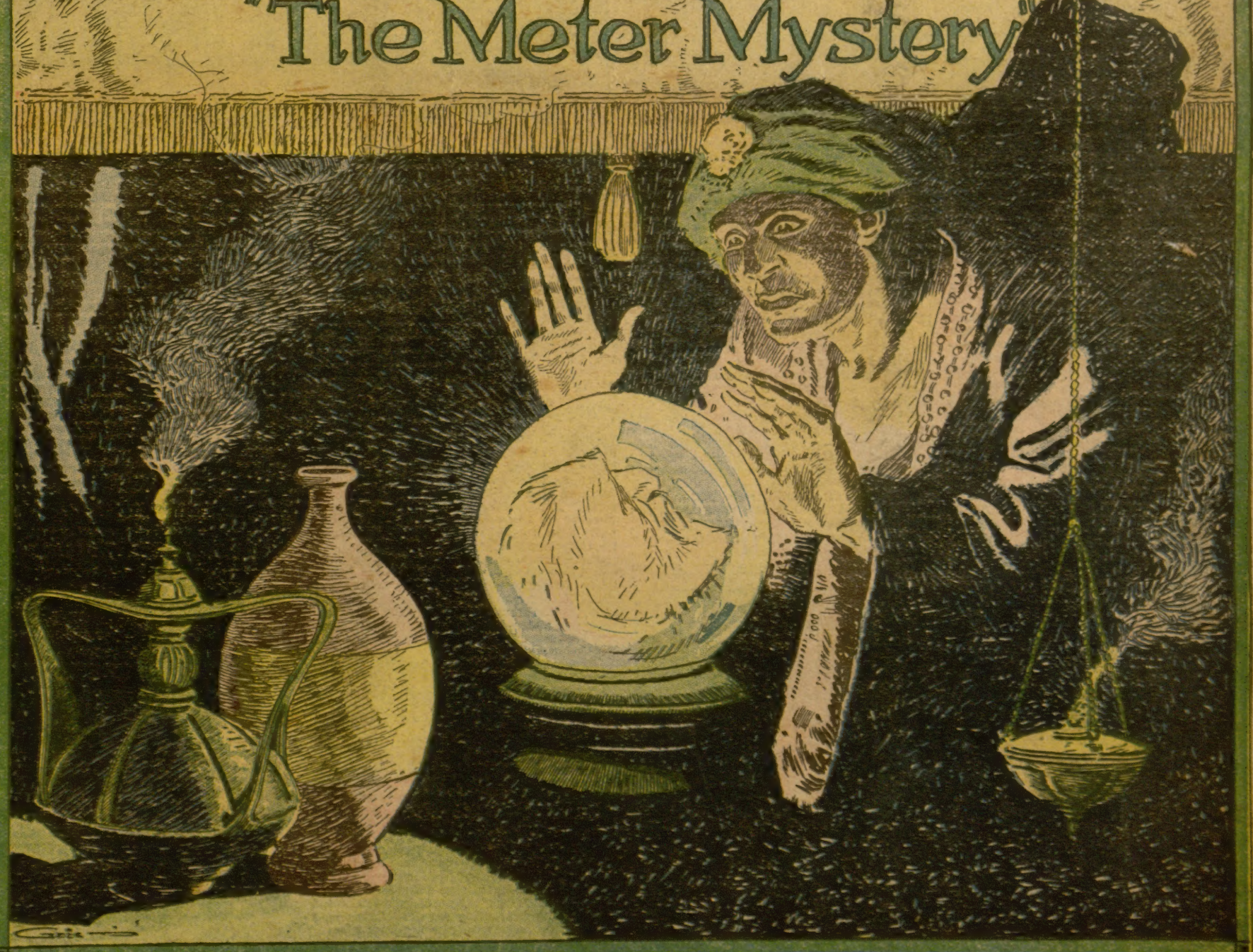
## "The Riddle of the Flying Hands"

## "The Albert Gate Enigma"

## "The Carnival Puzzle"

and

## "The Meter Mystery"



# The Carnival Puzzle

## BY LEWIS H. MOULTON

### Author Of "The Chessmen With The Ivory Dots"

**THERE is always a clew. Given the master mind to turn the key, what mystery cannot be solved? Here is the story of how John Gale found his man in the Carnival case by the three numbers and the three letters.**

* * *

About 8 o'clock one evening in the fall of 1919, Capt. Stephen Morley ran down the front steps of the Morley home, on the north side, and swung off down the avenue, whistling light-heartedly.

He had returned from overseas six months before, and the joy of being in "Chi" was as fresh as on the day he had paraded thru the "Loop" amid the cheering crowds. It was good to forget he had ever been an Army Captain; to play pool at Hogan's; to dance at the White City; to root for the Cubs; to do all the old familiar things, and tread the old familiar ways.

Yet he had been a good soldier, a good officer, strict as to discipline; in fact, something of a martinet. Rather young for a Captain, he had to be strict and stern to keep the mutinous crowd for whom he was responsible under his control.

At the corner drug store he met two cronies, Jamison and Carroll.

"You're late, Morley," said Carroll; "we'll have to get a move on us."

Down the street was the flat where Bob Jamison lived. Here they went in and remained for half an hour.

When they came forth, they presented a strange, and, if such be your humor, a laughable appearance. Jamison and Carroll were rigged out as comic Germans, of the kind made familiar by the stage. Morley wore a little, round cap, a mask, and a costume of black and white stripes that was very loose and baggy.

They started off, joking and laughing with one another—on their way to the Riverview Carnival, the big closing "stunt" of the well-known amusement park.

Not wishing to be too conspicuous, they walked the distance of seven or eight blocks rather than take a surface car.

THEY entered the grounds a little before 9 o'clock, and joined with the others in the frolic; blowing horns, throwing confetti, and tickling with feathers girls who responded with good-natured giggles. With the others they took part in the gay procession which circled the grounds; and, when it broke up, resumed their places in the ever-moving throng that went round and round in perpetual promenade.

As they passed the dance hall Morley thought he recognized, in spite of her disguise, the girl with whom he had canceled a "date" to come to the Carnival.

"Good-by, boys, I'm thru! Meet you at the 'Chutes' in fifteen minutes."

In an instant he had blended with the gaily-colored crowd and was lost to sight.

At the end of the fifteen minutes Carroll and Jamison took their stand near the entrance to the "Chutes."

They waited.

Stephen Morley did not return.

Half an hour passed. They could still hear the splash and scream of the "chuting" couples, as well as the clatter of the Jack-Rabbit; but the crowd was thinning, and the Merrie Garden was stilled and dark. But Stephen Morley did not come.

Each in turn went to look for him. They did not find him.

At last Bob Jamison broke out irritably, "Oh, shoot, let's go home, Carroll. He's gone with the girl. It's too bad, for the night is young."

In an ill humor, they gave up and went home.

It was between 11 and 12 that a gatekeeper on the west side saw a stoop-shouldered fellow in a brown suit, and wearing a mask, leaving the park with a figure whose costume was of stripes that were black and white.

NORA, the hired girl at Moran's, was a cheerful soul. For the most part, her mind was unclouded by anxiety of any kind.

But this particular morning one thing bothered her. It was getting late; she had gone her usual round, airing and straightening the beds; but the occupant of the back room on the upper floor had not vacated it so she might do her work.

It was very quiet in there. Several times, as she passed the door, she listened, but did not hear the regular breathing of a late sleeper. She was sure he had not gone out.

At last she lost patience; and, suddenly indifferent as to whether she disturbed him or not, knocked on the door; at first faintly, and then, as there was no response, more loudly. No one answered.

Feeling sure, now, that the room was unoccupied, she went in. A bit timidly she glanced toward the bed. It was empty. But, here was something odd. It had not been opened. Apparently the covers were as unruffled as she had left them the morning before.

"Funny," she said, "that bird never slept here."

Then she looked around—and shrieked.

"Oh! Oh! Come quick!"

It so happened that the other lodgers were not in, but Mrs. Moran toiled painfully up the stairs, red-faced and panting.

"What is it, Nora? What's the matter?" she managed to gasp as she attained the landing.

"Look!" Nora pointed with quivering finger.

Prone upon the floor lay the body of a young man, his stiffened arms stretched before him. From the half-turned, ashen face, stared an eye that was fixed and glazed. But grotesquely terrible, the outstanding detail was the frivolous and bizarre appearance of the stark form, arrayed in the black and white stripes of the gay Carnival at Riverview.

"Nora, get a cop! Find a cop! Get Murphy. He's at Kelly's maybe. Hurry Nora, for God's sake, hurry!"

IT WAS mysterious enough.

Police Sergeant Dennison, to whom Murphy had made report of Nora's grim discovery, questioned the girl closely. With sundry hysterical ejaculations, she told the story with which you are already familiar.

Who had rented the room? She did not know. What did he look like? She did not know. She had not seen him leave or return to the house. During the night there had been no unusual sounds or occurrences.

The landlady could add little. The facts seemed to indicate that she was neither prudent nor observant.

Early in the evening a dark man, very round-shouldered, dressed in a black, ill-fitting coat, had wanted a room for the night. Mrs. Moran was that "played out" from the labors of an efficient landlady that she had scarcely looked at him, but had taken the money—paid in advance—and pushed toward him the key which he would need when he returned later. He put it in his pocket and left immediately. From that moment she had not thought of him or of the room until summoned by the cries of Nora.

One other lodger had come into that front room which served as an office, just as the above negotiation was in progress. He had noticed the man bend to examine some printed matter on the table, and judged him to be near-sighted. According to his memory, the coat was of a light color and of stylish cut.

There was no mystery as to the way in which the victim had met his death.

Of the two windows in the chamber, one was locked. In the grass below the other, which had been opened, was a short iron bar upon which were blood stains and finger prints.

With regard to the latter, a young "dick," but recently assigned to this kind of work, observed with blunt skepticism:

"By these, and a city census, we may find the fellow."

Upon the head was an ugly wound, blood from which had blotched the carpet and stained crimson the white stripes of the Carnival costume.

Nothing indicated robbery. The lodging-house, tho cheap and dingy, was respectable, and its inmates of satisfactory character.

That was all. There appeared to be no clew.

After the medical examiner had done his work, Dennison ordered the body to be removed and the place closed. Leaving a man under strict orders to see that nothing was disturbed he returned to headquarters.

CARROLL read the account of the murder in the afternoon edition of the "Herald." With a premonition of what he was to learn, he called up the Morley home. Neither the father nor the brother was there, but the servant said that Stephen had not come in the night before. Now, thoroly alarmed, Carroll hurried to the station, from where they took him to the undertaking rooms to identify the body of Stephen Morley.

He told the police sergeant all he could about the young officer and of their ill-fated pleasure trip; but there was little that was illuminating in his story. One detail corroborated a theory that the police had already formed. Morley had no more than a two-dollar bill on his person the night of the Carnival.

As far as he knew, the victim had no enemies, was concerned in no love affair, had provoked no jealousies. Before he went, Carroll left with the police sergeant the name and address of Bob Jamison.

That young man added nothing, but confirmed all that Carroll had said.

The case dragged on. Stephen's activities of the summer were viewed from every possible angle. His relations with the other members of the family were looked into. At length, in sheer desperation, they arrested the brother, Van Morley, on the grounds of a quarrel dating back two years, the occasion of which was Van's contemptuous reference, in Steve's hearing, to the flag as a "silly piece of bunting." But they soon freed the unpatriotic young man, as there was not a particle of evidence against him.

At the end of a week the Deputy Superintendent lost patience. He called Dennison on the carpet.

"I want action. You've fiddled around with this long enough. Quick action. I'll get a private detective."

So it was that John Gale was called upon to take a hand in the curious Carnival puzzle.

HE LISTENED to the story of the Deputy Superintendent, saying nothing, taking no notes. It was his habit thus to store facts in a mind that was singularly retentive. When the official had concluded, he asked, "May I see the prints?"

He studied them carefully. When he returned them, he said, "I take it these will be accessible at any time?"

"Certainly."

"The room, you say, has been sealed for a week?"

"Absolutely."

"Pardon me. I will use your phone." With courteous nonchalance Gale took the instrument from the desk. He spoke quietly into the transmitter.

"This is Gale talking. You remember Moran's, two blocks north of Riverview? Meet me there in half an hour."

He turned to the Deputy Superintendent and said, "I always have Evans share with me the first impressions. We get the thing from different points of view."

At noon Gale and Evans entered the little chamber at Moran's which had been the scene of the tragedy. Deliberately Gale went about his investigation, not in the least like a bloodhound on the trail; rather as one, who, with calm precision, moves toward the accomplishment of his purposes.

The little apartment was as described; the door from the corridor, the locked and open windows, the carpet with its bloody traces.

For a long time they were busy; measuring, calculating distances from the body to the window, from the window to the ground, endeavoring to reconstruct the fearful drama in detail, that, by some happy chance, they might evoke the shadow of its principal actor.

Near the bed stood a waste-paper basket, the top of which rounded inward so as to partially conceal whatever contents it might have. Suddenly Gale bent forward and peered into this basket. He took something from it.

"Evans, what do you make of all this?"

The assistant grinned sheepishly. "On the night of the Carnival some one bumped off Captain Morley with an iron bar. That is the beginning and end of all that I find."

Gale smiled upon him benignly.

"Get Nora."

THE girl appeared, with a frightened look on her face. She was not yet accustomed to the gruff minions of the law, who, for more than a week now, had made themselves so obnoxious within her hitherto unviolated domain.

"Nora, has anything in this room been disturbed since Captain Morley's body was found?"

"N-no, sir."

"Nora, was it one of your duties to empty this basket?"

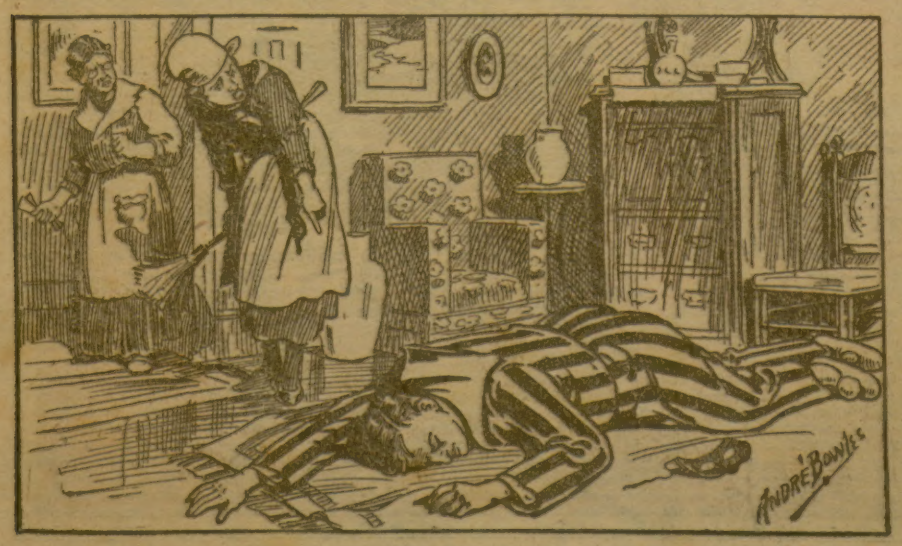
"Yes, sir, every day."

"When did you last empty it?"

"The day before the man was found

(Continued on Page 18.)

"Good-by, Boys, I'm Thru! Meet You at the Chutes."




"Nora, Get a Cop! Find a Cop! Get Murphy! He's at Kelly's, Maybe, Hurry, Nora, for God's Sake, Hurry!"

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# The Albert Gate Enigma

## BY LOUIS TRACY

Author of "Wings of the Morning" Etc.

REGINALD BRETT, lawyer and well-known amateur detective, had seldom been more at peace with the world and his own conscience than when he entered the dining-room of his cozy flat in London this bright October morning.

Since his last successful criminal case, he had not been busy, and the joy of healthy idleness is only known to the hard worker. Again, while dressing, he had received a letter inviting him to a quiet shoot at a delightful place in the country.

All these things blended with happy inconsequence to render Brett contented in mind and affable in manner.

"It's a fine morning, Smith," he said cheerily, as he settled himself at the table where his "man" was already pouring out the coffee.

"Bee-utiful, sir," said Smith.

"Smith!"

"Yessir."

"Not even the best English autumn weather can stand being called 'bee-utiful.' Don't do it. You will open the flood-gates of Heaven."

Smith laughed decorously. He had not the slightest idea what his master meant, but if it pleased Mr. Brett to be jocose, it was the duty of a servant who knew his place to be responsive.

The barrister fully understood Smith's delicate appreciation—and its limits. He instantly noticed that the morning paper, instead of reposing next to his folded napkin, was placed out of reach on a sideboard, and that the eggs and bacon made their appearance half a minute too soon.

As an expert swordsman delights to execute a pass with an umbrella, so did the cleverest analytical detective of the age resolve to amaze his servitor.

"Smith," he said suddenly, composing his features to their most severe cross-examination aspect, "I think the arrangement is an excellent one."

"What arrangement, sir?"

"That Mrs. Smith and yourself should have a few days' holiday, while Mrs. Smith's brother takes your place during my forthcoming visit to Lord Northallerton's—why, man, what is the matter? Is it too hot?" for the cover Smith had lifted off the bacon and eggs clattered violently on the table.

"'Ot, sir. 'Ot isn't the word. You're a fair licker, that's what you are."

Smith invariably dropped his h's when he became excited.

"Smith, I insist that you shall not call me names. Pass the paper."

"But, sir——"

"Pass the paper. Utter another word and I refuse to accept Mrs. Smith's brother as your substitute."

SMITH was silenced by the last terrible epithet. Yet he was so manifestly nervous that Brett resolved to enlighten him before plunging into the day's news.

"For the last time, Smith," he said, "I will explain to you why it is hopeless for you to think of concealing tradesmen's commissions from me."

The shot went home, but the enemy was acquainted with this method of attack, and did not wince.

"You knew that Lord Northallerton had recently invited me to his October pheasant-shooting. During the last few days a youth, who grotesquely reproduces Mrs. Smith's most prominent features, has mysteriously tenanted the kitchen, ill-cleaned my boots, and bungled over the studs in my shirts. This morning a letter came with the crest and the Northallerton postmark. Really, Smith, considering that you have now breathed the same air as myself for eight long years, I did not expect to be called on for an explanation. Besides, you have destroyed a masterpiece."

"Sir——" began Smith.

"Oh, I understand; there is nothing broken but your reputation. Don't you see that the mere placing of the newspaper at a distance, so that you might have a chance to speak before I opened it, with a subtle stroke, worthy of Lecocq. Yet you demand feeble words. What a pity! Know, Smith, that true genius is dumb. Speech may be silvern, but silence is surely golden."

The barrister solemnly unfolded the paper, and smith faded from the room. On the page usually devoted to important announcements, the following paragraphs stood forth in the boldness of leaded type:

### POLICE BAFFLED BY WEST END MYSTERY

An affair of some magnitude—perhaps a remarkable crime—has taken place in a mansion at the suburb of Albert Gate.

Owing to the reticence of the authorities it is at present impossible to arrive at a definite conclusion as to the nature or extent of the incident, but it is quite certain that public interest will be much excited when details are forthcoming. All sorts of rumors attain credence in the locality, the murder of several prominent persons being not the least persistent of these. Without, however, giving currency to idle speculation, several authentic statements may be grouped into a connected form.

Four weeks ago a party of Turkish gentlemen of high rank in Constantinople, arrived in London and took up their abode in the house in question, after some structural alterations, pointing at great security within and without, had been planned and executed.

Attending these Turkish gentlemen, or officers, was a numerous suite of Moslem guards and servants, whilst, immediately following their arrival, came from Amsterdam some dozen noted experts in the diamond-cutting industry. These were lodged in a neighboring private hotel, where they were extremely uncommunicative as to their business in London. They were employed during the day at the Albert Gate house. The presence in the mansion, both day and night, of a strong force of Metropolitan police, tended to excite local curiosity to an intense degree, but no clear conception of the business of the occupants was allowed to reach the public.

Whatever it was that took place, the full particulars were not only well known to the authorities—the presence of the police hints even at Governmental sanction—but matters proceeded on normal lines until yesterday morning.

Then it became clear that a remarkable development must have occurred during the preceding night, as the whole of the Dutch workmen and the Turkish attendants were taken off in cabs by the police, not to Morton Street Police Station, but to Scotland Yard; this in itself being a most unusual course to adopt. They are unquestionably detained in custody, but they have not yet been charged before a magistrate.

The police, later in the day, carried off some of these men's personal belongings, from both hotel and mansion.

A sinister aspect was given to the foregoing mysterious proceedings by the presence at Albert Gate, early in the day, of two police surgeons, who were followed, about 12 o'clock, by Dr. Tennyson Coke, the greatest living authority on toxicology.

Dr. Coke and the other medical gentlemen subsequently refused to impart the slightest information as to the reasons that led the police to seek their services, and the Scotland Yard authorities are adamant in the matter

BRETT read this interesting statement twice slowly. It fascinated him. Its very vagueness, its admissions of inability to tell what had really happened, its adroit use of such phrases as "Turkish gentlemen of high rank." "Noted experts in the diamond-cutting industry," "The greatest living authority on toxicology," betrayed the hand of the disappointed journalistic artist.

He carefully examined the page at the back. It contained matter of no consequence—a London County Council debate—so he took a pair of scissors from his pocket and cut out the complete item, placing the slip as a votive offering in front of a finely executed bust of Edgar Allen Poe, that stood on a bookcase behind him.

Within three minutes the scissors were again employed. The new cutting ran:

### TROUBLE IN TURKEY

CONSTANTINOPLE, Oct. 18.—(Reuter's Telegram)—There is trouble at Yildiz Kiosk. A near relative of the Sultan has fled to France. The Porte have asked the French government to apprehend him, but the French ambassador has informed Riaz Pasha that this course is impracticable in the absence of any criminal charge.

"These two are one," said the barrister, as he turned toward Poe's bust and laid the slip by the side of its predecessor.

The rest of the newspaper's contents had no special interest for him, and he

**Every One Who Left the House Was Searched by the Inspector on Duty.**

soon threw aside the journal in order to rise, light a cigarette, and muster sufficient energy to write a telegram accepting Lord Northallerton's invitation for the following day.

He was on the point of reaching for a telegraph form when Smith entered with a card. It bore the name and address:

The Earl of Fairholme, Stanhope Gate.

"Curious," thought Brett. "Where is his lordship?" he said aloud—"at the door, or in the street?"

(Brett's apartment was on the second floor.)

"In a keb, sir."

"Bring his lordship up."

A rapid glance at "Who's Who" revealed that the Earl of Fairholme was 30, unmarried, the fourteenth of his line, and the possessor of country seats at Fairholme, Warwickshire and Glen Spey, Inverness.

The Earl entered, an athletic, well-groomed man, one whose lines were usually cast in pleasant places, but who was now in an unwonted state of flurry and annoyance.

Each man was favorably impressed by the other. His lordship produced an introductory card, and Brett was astonished to find that it bore the name of the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

"I have come——" commenced his lordship hesitatingly.

But the barrister broke in. "You have had a bad night, Lord Fairholme. You wish for a long and comfortable chat. Now, won't you start with a whisky and soda, light a cigar, and draw an easy chair near the fire?"

"'Pon my honor, Mr. Brett, you begin well. You give me confidence. Those are the first cheerful words I have heard during twenty-four hours."

THE Earl was easily maneuvered into a strong light. Then he made a fresh start.

"You have doubtless heard of this Albert Gate affair, Mr. Brett?"

"You mean this?" said the other, rising and handing to his visitor the longer paragraph of the two he had selected from the newspaper.

"That is very curious," said the Earl, momentarily startled. But he was too preoccupied by his thoughts to pay much heed to the incident. He merely glanced at the clipping and went on:

"Yes, that is it. Well, Edith—Miss Talbot, I mean—vows that she won't marry me until this beastly business is cleared up. Of course, we all know that Jack didn't skip with the diamonds. He's tied up or dead, for sure. But—no matter what may have become of him—why the dickens that should stop Edith from marrying me is more than I can fathom. Just look at some of the women in society. They don't leave it to their relatives to be mixed up in a scandal, I can tell you. Still there you are. Edith is jolly clever and awfully determined, so you've got to find him, Mr. Brett. Dead or alive, he must be found, and cleared."

"He shall," said Brett, gazing into the fire.

The quiet, self-reliant voice steadied the young peer. He checked an imminent flow of words, picked up the newspaper slip again, and this time read it. Then he blushed.

"You must think me very stupid, Mr. Brett, to burst out in such a manner when you probably have never heard of the people I am talking about."

"You will tell me, Lord Fairholme, if you get quietly to work and try to speak, so far as you find it possible, in chronological sequence."

His lordship knitted his brows and smoked in silence. At last he found utterance.

"That's a good idea of yours. It makes things easier. Well, first of all, Edith and I became engaged. Edith is the daughter of the late Admiral Talbot. She and Jack, her brother, live with their uncle, General Sir Hubert Fitzjames, at 118 Ulster Gardens. Jack is in the Foreign Office; he is just like Edith, awfully clever and that sort of thing, an assistant secretary I think they call him. Now we're getting on, aren't we?"

"Splendidly."

"That's all right. About a month ago a chap turns up from Constantinople, a kind of special envoy from the Sultan, and he explains to the Foreign Office that he has in his possession a lot of uncut diamonds of terrific value, including one as big as a duck's egg, to which no figures would give a price. Do you follow me?"

"Each word."

"Good. Well—I can't tell you why, because I don't know, and I could not understand it if I did—there was some political importance attached to these gems, and the Sultan roped our Foreign Office into it. So the Foreign Office placed Jack in charge of the business. He fixed up the envoy in the house at Albert Gate, got a lot of diamond cutters and machinery for him, gave him into the charge of all the smart policemen in London; and what do you think is the upshot?"

"What?"

"The envoy, his two secretaries, and a confidential servant were murdered the night before last, the diamonds were stolen, and Jack vanished—absolutely gone clear into space, not a sign of him to be found anywhere. Yesterday Edith sends for me, cries for half an hour, tells me I'm the best fellow that ever lived, and then I'm jiggered if she didn't wind up by saying that she couldn't marry me."

The Earl of Fairholme was worked up to fever heat. He would not calm down for an appreciable period, so Brett resolved to try the effect of curiosity.

He wrote a telegram to Lord Northallerton:

> Very sorry, but I cannot leave town at present. Please ask me later. Will explain reason for postponement when we meet.

He had touched the dominant note in mankind.

"Surely!" cried the Earl, "you have not already decided upon a course of action?"

"Not exactly. I am wiring to postpone a shooting engagement."

"What a beastly shame!" exclaimed the other, in whom the sporting instinct was at once aroused. "I'm awfully sorry my affairs should interfere with your arrangements in this way."

"Not a bit," cried Brett. "I make it a sacred rule of life to put pleasure before business. I mean," he explained, as a look of bewilderment crossed his hearer's face, "that this quest of ours promises to be the most remarkable affair I have ever been engaged in. That pleases me. Pheasant-shooting is a serious business, governed by the calendar and arranged by the headkeeper."

An electric bell summoned Smith. The barrister handed him the telegram and a sovereign.

"Read that message," he said. "Ponder over it. Send it, and give the change of the sovereign to Mrs. Smith's brother, with my compliments and regrets."

## CHAPTER II.

### MEHEMET ALI'S NOTE.

THEN he turned to Lord Fairholme.

"Just one question," he said, "before I send you off to bed. No, you must not protest. I want you to meet me here this evening at 7, with your brain clear and your nerves restored by a good, sound sleep. We will dine, here or elsewhere, and act subsequently. But at this moment I want to know the name of the person most readily accessible who can tell me all about Mr. Talbot's connection with the Sultan's agent."

"His sister, undoubtedly."

"Where can I find her?"

"At Ulster Gardens. I will drive you there."

The barrister smiled. "You are going to bed, I tell you. Give me a few lines of introduction to Miss Talbot."

The Earl's face had brightened at the prospect of meeting his fiancee under the favorable conditions of Brett's presence. But he yielded with good grace, and promptly sat down to write a brief note explanatory of the barrister's identity and position in the inquiry.

The two parted at the door, and a hansom rapidly brought Brett to the residence of Sir Hubert Fitzjames.

A stately footman took Reggie's card and its accompanying letter, placed them on a tray with a graceful turn of his wrist, which oddly suggested a similar turn in his nose, and said:

"Miss Talbot is not at home, sir."

"Yes, she is," answered Brett, paying the driver of the hansom.

The footman deigned to exhibit astonishment. Here was a gentleman—one obviously accustomed to the manners of of society—who declined to accept the courteous disclaimer of an unexpected visit.

"Miss Talbot is not receiving visitors," he explained.

"Exactly. Take that card and the letter to Miss Talbot and bring me the answer."

Jeames was no match for his antagonist. He silently showed the way into a reception room and disappeared. A minute later he announced, with much deference, that Miss Talbot would see Mr. Brett in the library, and he conducted this mysterious visitor upstairs.

On rejoining Buttons in the hall he solemnly observed:

"That's a swell cop who is with the missus — shining topper, button-hole, buckskin gloves, patent leathers, all complete. Footmen ain't in it with the force, nowadays."

Jeames expanded his magnificent waistcoat with a heavy sigh over this philosophical dictum, the poignancy of which was enhanced by his knowledge that the upper housemaid had taken to conversing with a mounted policeman in the park during her afternoons off.

The apartment in which Brett found himself gave ready indications of the character of its tenants. Tod's "Rajasthan" jostled a volume of the Badminton Library on the bookshelves, a copy of the Allahabad Pioneer lay beside the Field and the Times on the table, and many varieties of horns made trophies with quaint weapons on the walls.

A complete edition of Ruskin, and some exquisite prints of Rossetti's best-known works, supplied a different set of emblems, whilst the room generally showed signs of daily occupation.

"Anglo-Indian uncle, artistic niece," was the barrister's rapid comment, but further analysis was prevented by the entrance of Miss Edith Talbot.

The surprise of the pair was mutual.

Brett expected to see a young, pretty and clever girl, vain enough to believe she had brains, and sufficiently well endowed with that rare commodity to be able to twist the good-natured Earl of Fairholme round her little finger.

Young, not more than 20—unquestionably beautiful, with the graceful contour and delicately-balanced features of a portrait by Romney—Edith Talbot bore few of the marks that pass current as the outward and visible signs of a modern woman of society. That she should be self-possessed and dressed in perfect taste were as obvious adjuncts of her character as that each phase of her clear thought should reflect itself in a singularly mobile face.

To such a woman pretense was impossible, the polite fictions of fashionable life impossible. Brett readily understood why the Earl of Fairholme had fallen in love with her. He had simply bent in worship before a goddess of his own creed.

To the girl, Brett was equally a revelation.

Fairholme's introductory note described the barrister as "the smartest criminal lawyer in London—one whose aid would be invaluable." She expected to meet a sharp-featured, wizened, elderly man, with gold-rimmed eyeglasses, a queer voice and a nasty habit of asking unexpected questions.

In place of this commonplace personality, she encountered a handsome, well-groomed gentleman—one who won confidence by his intellectual face, and retained it by invisibly establishing a social equality. Fortunately, there is yet in Britain an aristocracy wherein good birth is synonymous with good breeding—a freemasonry whose passwords cannot be simulated, nor its membership bought.

BRETT read the wonder in the girl's eyes, and hastened to explain.

"The Earl of Fairholme," said Brett, "thought I might be of some service in the matter of your brother's strange disappearance, Miss Talbot. I am not a professional detective, but my friends are good enough to believe that I am very successful in unraveling mysteries that are beyond the ken of Scotland Yard. I have heard something of the facts in this present affair. Will you trust me so far as to tell me all that is known to you personally?"

"My uncle, General Fitzjames, has just gone to Scotland Yard," she began timidly.

"Quite so. Perhaps you prefer to wait his return?"

"Oh, no, I do not mean that. But it is so hard to know how best to act. Uncle expects the police to accomplish impossibilities. He says that they should long since have found out what has become of Jack. Perhaps they may resent my interference."

"My interference, to be exact," said Reggie, with the pleasant smile that had fascinated so many women. Even Edith Talbot was not wholly proof against its magic.

"I, personally, have little faith in them," she confessed.

"I have none."

"Well, I shall do as you advise."

"Then I recommend you to take me into your confidence. I know Scotland Yard and its methods. We do not follow the same path."

"I believe in you and trust you," said the girl.

So ingenuous was the look from the large, deep eyes which accompanied this declaration of confidence that many men would have pronounced Miss Talbot to be an experienced flirt. Brett knew better. He simply bowed his acknowledgements.

"What is it that you want to know?" she continued. "We ourselves are no better informed than the newspapers as to what was actually happened, save

**"Ah, Mr. Brett, Now We Have Something to Do That Is Up to Your Mark. You Are on the Spot First, as Usual, but This Time I Can Honestly Say I Am Glad to See You."**

(Continued on Page 12.)

# The Million Dollar Suitcase

by

## Horace Hazeltine

Author of "THE SABLE LORCHA"

Before the Bag Was Half Empty He Had Roughly Counted Up to Over Half a Million Dollars.

JOHN BROOKE sat on the side of the bed and stared dreamily, abstracted and unseeing, at the empty fireplace across the room.

"Is there anything I can get for you, sir?"

A blue-uniformed bellboy, who had switched on the electric light, opened a window and turned up the catches of Brooke's traveling bag, asked the question as he stood with a hand on the knob.

Thus aroused, the young man extracted a dime from his trousers pocket and held it out to the lad.

"No, nothing, thank you," he answered. And then, as the boy's hand closed over the coin, he added: "You can have me called at 8 o'clock tomorrow, if you will."

Left to himself, Brooke's dream was not renewed. In its place was an overwhelming sense of loneliness.

Suddenly he had fallen prey to depression. He was alone, not only in a strange city, but in a strange land. And yet, it was the land of his nativity. By birth he was an American; but from infancy he had dwelt on sun-kissed Oahu in the far Pacific—the crossroads of three continents. And his home had been Honolulu, the Beautiful, where "Aloha" ("Love to you!") is the watchword.

He had found New York chill, damp and inhospitable by contrast. The taxicab man who drove him from the station had snarled at him, and the room-clerk in the hotel office below had treated him with superior indifference. Only the silver-buttoned bellboy had been half-way kindly; and even his attentions bore the stamp of the impersonal, the stereotyped, the fee-expecting.

He wondered whether Boston, whither he was bound, would give him more cordial greeting; whether it would seem less forbidding on first acquaintance. There, at all events, he would not be totally friendless, for, suddenly orphaned, he was going to his uncle—his mother's brother—who was on the Stock Exchange and had promised him a place in his office.

Brooke was almost sorry now that he had decided to stop over in New York. It would have been pleasanter, probably, to go on and find a welcome at his journey's end, instead of halting on the threshold where he was unknown and kindly greeting was not to be expected. But he had long cherished a desire to see the great metropolis of the United States. He had read of it, heard stories about it, and listened to descriptions of its wonders until it had become a sort of luring obsession. And now, after traveling nearly six thousand miles, he had come upon his prize, only to find the gilt tarnished and the coloring dimmed.

Presently he drew his hand impatiently across his eyes, took a deep breath, stretched himself and stood up, making a gallant effort to throw off the melancholy mood which had dropped upon him—admitting that he was not fair to his host; that the fault was with himself and the conditions rather than with his stopping place and its people; that he was weary after his journey; that it was the weather and the hour which was to blame; that instead of observing during his short ride from the railway station he had fallen into a dream, imprisoned behind the rain-washed windows of his taxicab, and that the dream had been one of mixed pleasure and pain and far removed from the present time and place.

HE STOOD for a moment before the long, plate-mirror panel of the closet door, telling his reflection these things, and scanning deprecatingly the figure which faced him. He scarcely blamed the cabman now for his snarl, or the room-clerk for his superior air, for he saw himself travel-soiled, unshaven and unshorn—his whole appearance shabby and unkempt. Swarthy-skinned, as are all dwellers in the Hawaiian archipelago, his duskiness was augmented by the dust of travel, until his race might be a matter of question; and his clothes, of good material and originally well-fitting, were rent in some places and stained with mire and soot in others.

He glanced sideways at the gray hat of soft felt which lay upon the bureau between the windows, and smiled. It was scarcely more than a rag, and it was several sizes too large for him. But it had been better than no hat at all, and his own was lost in the accident last night. For a little he wondered where he had got his disreputable-appearing makeshift, and then he remembered: Yes, it had been given to him at the farmhouse where he had carried her.

And so he fell to dreaming again standing there, before the tall mirror. And on the summit of his hill of ghosts, was she whose eyes were blue pools of liquid light, and whose voice was the echo of purling brooks. Once more he held her close within his arms, her pallid face upon his shoulder, her fair hair soft against his cheek. And then he flushed beneath his grime, only to pale again at thought of how narrowly Death had passed her by. The Frenchwoman, her maid, sitting opposite her, had been a victim, killed instantly by the crushing weight of a detached upper berth, while a strong man, just behind her, had been dragged from the wreck an unrecognizable pulp of mangled flesh and broken bones.

Ten dead; twenty-four injured. That was the latest report; and for

some of the maimed there was, so the papers said, scant chance of recovery.

Brooke's own escape, too, had been a miracle. He recalled now that first sudden forward dip of the car, followed by a moment of swaying, reeling uncertainty, and then that terrifying darkness, and that awful crunching, ripping thunder, mingling with panic yells and agonizing shrieks, as the great bulk lurched over on its side, leaving him clinging, with bleeding hands, to the sash of a window from which all but a few splinters of shattered glass had been shaken.

Twenty-four hours had intervened, but the horror of the ensuing scenes was still very vivid. Yet over and above these rose the compensating joy of that all too brief acquaintance with her whom he had carried, limp and fainting, from out the hell of that wrecked and riven Pullman, wherein eager flames were lambently seeking to complete the dire work of a wrenched fishplate and a spread rail.

There was no gainsaying her gratitude. In her eyes and voice, more, even, than in her words, Brooke had found it, and his heart had pounded disconcertingly and his cheeks had flushed like a country schoolboy's under the praise of a pretty teacher.

A very broad streak of romance ran thru his nature, coupled with a spirited imagination, to which this experience made abundant appeal. For years he had lived largely in books, and especially in works of travel, novels of adventure, mystery stories and detective tales. Much of his reading had been of America, with American girls and women as heroines. But until this incident he had never met an American girl who answered to what he regarded as the true type—the type formed from his romance-gleaned impressions.

THERE were American girls in Honolulu, to be sure—some resident there, and occasional young women tourists from the United States—but none had ever quite come within the radius of his ideal.

And now he tore his heartstrings with vain regrets. For, when opportunity had offered, he had failed to make the most of it. While she had voiced her gratitude he had sat half dazed by her beauty and her charm, silent and unresponsive. He saw it all over again now, in his dream — the little kitchen of the humble farmhouse, the glowing cook stove, the rocking chair in which she sat with the fire light on her face; the farmer's wife kneeling and sewing up a long tear in her skirt; a group of young girls—the farmer's daughters, probably—standing awed but watchful in the shadows, and he, himself, awed, too, gazing, listening, but saying nothing.

Brooke worked hard. After depositing his burden at the farmhouse he had gone back to the wreck and labored energetically and tirelessly for hours, returning at length, when nothing remained to be done, to inquire after the well-being of the young woman whom fate had veritably thrown into his succoring arms.

He had found her then, as he saw her now again in his dream picture, safe and unharmed by so much as a scratch, and with only that one long rent in her skirt. How he had gazed his admiration, while he drank in thirstily every word and gesture of the girl as she poured forth her gratitude!

He had, silently, too, made mental inventory of her charms, photographing them, as it were, on his memory. And in the midst of this engaging occupation there had come that abrupt interruption—the eastbound relief train was about to pull out, and there was barely time to catch it.

Hurriedly he had got to his feet, and as hurriedly had he bidden her good-by—confusedly, too, with telltale blushes and stammering phrases. She was returning to Chicago, she had said, and the westbound train was not yet ready, so the farmhouse had witnessed their hasty and, on his side, embarrassed parting.

He had gone away dreaming, just as he was dreaming now, and not until his train was well on its way toward Buffalo had he awakened to the fact that he did not even know this extraordinary young woman's name. All he had of her was his mental inventory and his memory photograph—poor enough, indeed, and most unsatisfying, tho all the way to New York he had been making good use of it, working it overtime, so to speak, to the effect at least of quite forgetting his own personal soiled and bedraggled appearance.

AND so, his dream circling round, brought him back to self once more, and his unpleasantly disreputable reflection in the mirror.

He glanced now at his watch, and saw that it was some minutes after 11. Well, he would have a bath and a shave and turn in, and tomorrow his trunks would be here and he could put on another suit of clothes, and the hotel barber should cut his hair, and he would buy himself a new hat. Then, maybe, New York would have more respect for him, and he, in turn, would like New York better. Thinking thus, he stepped into his bathroom and turned on the water, stopping to regulate the hot and cold faucets to the temperature he desired.

"A Section Hand Found the Dead Body of a Young Man Who Had Evidently Fallen or Jumped From One of the Incoming Trains. The Man's Skull Was Crushed and Death Was Probably Instantaneous."

Then he returned to the bedroom, threw off his coat and removed his neck-scarf and collar, determined to shave while his bath ran. His shaving implements were in his suitcase, which the bellboy had placed on a table near the bureau, under an electric bracket.

He turned to this now, and with accustomed thumb pressed the spring. But the bag did not open. He pressed again, harder this time, and pulled viciously at the frame, but still it remained close fastened.

"I'm sure I didn't lock it," he told himself. "I haven't any key. I wonder if the jolting of the train could have sprung it."

Once more he tried, using all his strength; but still the lock held. Then he got out his pocket-knife. With it he pried determinedly, until between the bending frames he forced the blade. Now all that was required was strong pressure of the improvised lever, and—Snap! the lock gave way, and the bag yawned open, the lid falling halfway back.

Brooke plunged a hand in after his razors. But the hand came out more suddenly than it went in, for instead of encountering cloth, linen and such solid articles as brushes, soap boxes and razor cases, it had gone floundering about in a mass of more or less crinkly paper, and Brooke knew—intuitively, it seemed to him—that he had been robbed of his belongings, and that waste paper had been substituted for the stolen property.

Impulsively he spread the gaping mouth of the bag farther apart and stared into its paper-crammed depths. And then his eyes opened, too, his breath stopped short with a sudden half inhalation, a shiver ran along his spine, and his hands trembled and grew weak. For the paper was all in oblong pieces of about the same dimensions, printed in green and black and yellow, with a little dash of red here and there, on a bluish-white or gray ground.

Brooke was not on the most familiar terms with the paper currency of the United States, in bulk, but unless he was greatly deceived this was the real article—no stage money about it—and at a rough estimate the bag must contain thousands—many thousands—of dollars; for before that first wide staring gaze there had danced double Xs and Cs and 50s and 500s until his eyes blinked themselves blind and his brain grew dizzy at the sight.

## CHAPTER II.
## INVENTION.

FOR a moment Brooke fancied that he was still dreaming; that he had fallen asleep and that his subliminal self was reveling in imaginative riches. He had on more than one occasion had sleeping visions of this sort. Once he had dreamed of stores of gold beyond his ability to carry away.

He straightened himself and looked about the room; glanced again into the mirror at his reflection; walked to a window and gazed down upon the gleaming, jewel-like electric signs which shone thru the mist and rain along the Great White Way.

No, there was no dream about this, of that he was assured. And then he wondered if, after all, it had been an optical illusion. It was not within the range of possibility that such a transformation could have happened. The day of miracles was long past. Prepared to find that his eyes had deceived him, he returned to the table and its gaping pigskin burden. Once more he went to the open suitcase and looked in. The interior, illuminated by the electric bracket lamp above, was packed tight with money.

He took out a handful of the bills and examined them with careful scrutiny. Some were new and still were crackling; others were soft and flimsy from much handling. He found shreds of blue silk fiber in the paper, which he thought was ample proof they were not counterfeit, but he closely inspected the engraving, the scroll work, the signatures, nevertheless. He was not an expert, but the bills certainly seemed to him genuine.

He dug his hands deep down in the bag and hollowed out the center, thinking that beneath the

(Continued on Page 14.)

# The METER MYSTERY

BY ISOBEL M. REYNOLDS

Author of "THE CIRCLE OF GREEN"

TEDDY was listening attentively.

"Your Uncle William," Mildred was saying, "really seemed to make a display of using gas at all hours, yet each month, when the collector opened the coin-box attached to the quarter meter, he could find only a single 25-cent piece."

"Some one tampering with the coin-box?" questioned Ted.

"Experts say no," replied the girl. "Of course, when this had been going on for two or three months, dad, as president and chief stockholder of the gas company, took a hand in the affair. Experts in chemistry, locks and meters were brought from all over the country, but so far nothing has been discovered. I don't know how often your uncle's meter has been changed and inspected, but all of no use."

"These experts—have they no suggestion to offer?"

"Not a thing so far. Their reports testify that the property of the gas company is in first-class condition and good running order. There's not a trace of slugs or foreign substances within the coin-box, so they say, and the matter's just as much a mystery as ever."

"It's a wonder the company hasn't shut off his supply."

"That's been done, but your uncle brought suit against them. The court contended that he was entitled to gas service as well as electricity. Then what do you think?"

"I'm past the thinking stage," perplexedly from the young man.

"The company sent a letter to your Uncle William, hinting that amicable terms might be arranged and requesting him to call. His gas service was restored, as the experts declared that they could make no investigations unless the supply was in operation."

"And Uncle William?" questioned the scandalized nephew.

"Ignored the letter and used the gas. You know dad and his ungovernable temper? Well, your uncle and my father met one day. A lot of verbal fireworks were exploded on dad's part, while your uncle, irritatingly cool, declared that he had dropped a quarter in the coin box of the meter each month only as a salve to his conscience. In future, he said, he would prove that he could use all of the gas that he desired without payment of a single cent, and do you know, Ted, he's done that very thing!"

"That seems impossible, Milly. Those experts must be awful dubs. Why didn't you tell me all this in your letters?"

"To what purpose? It would have worried you and I thought that you had enough on your mind in settling up your grandfather's estate."

"Thoughtful girl," laughed Ted. "But, Milly dear, I've good news for you. Just think! I'm grandfather's sole heir. It's not a struggling young journalist but a rich man that's going to ask your dad for his little daughter."

"Money makes no difference to dad; you ought to know that, Ted," replied Milly. "But if my father thought that I was engaged to the nephew of his worst enemy——"

"He'll have to know sooner or later," interrupted Ted.

"Make it later," counseled Milly. "At present, dad's not only in an unapproachable humor, but he's confined to his room with an attack of gout. If he knew that you were in the house now——" Milly paused, her frightened gestures more eloquent than words in expressing the course of action she believed her choleric parent would pursue.

"DON'T worry, girlie, I'll take your advice and wait, since you wish it," agreed Ted, "but I'm going to institute a few investigations on my own account. It would be fun if I could put one over on those experts and Uncle William, too, wouldn't it?"

"That's the way to talk, Ted," encouraged Milly. "But after all, William Carson's your uncle—it wouldn't seem quite fair for you to spy on him."

"All's fair in love," laughed Ted. "Anyway, there'll be no spying about my line of procedure, Milly dear. I'll tell him openly what I'm after. If he's willing to come to terms, well and good. If not, uncle or no uncle, he'll have to take the consequences. Wonder if I couldn't purchase his secret?"

"I don't think so," replied Milly. "Much against dad's individual wishes, the board of directors of the gas company already has suggested that your uncle name his own price. News travels apace and I have reason to know that the heads of certain slot machine companies, afraid of this menace spreading, also have approached Mr. Carson with tempting financial offers, all to no avail. It seems that your uncle's sole desire is to annoy my father."

"Poor little girl," sympathized Ted, Playfully turning up the corners of Milly's pretty mouth which had assumed a pathetic, downward droop, as she related the actions of their unruly relatives.

"Your uncle's very fond of you, Ted," continued the girl. "Couldn't you persuade him to give up his persecution of dad, just for your sake? And perhaps he might be induced to part with that dreadful piece of property. If you could accomplish this, Ted, it would do more to put you in dad's good graces than anything else in the world."

Ted placed his arm protectingly around Milly's shoulders.

"I'm afraid that you overrate my powers of persuasion," he laughed. "I've coaxed, begged, pleaded and threatened all in turn, but uncle won't budge an inch. And as to that plot of ground——"

A knock at the door, followed by the entrance of a frightened-looking maid, prevented the finish of Ted's speech.

"If you please, Miss Milly, Mr. Derwent's a-askin' fer you," announced the maid in timid tones.

"Nothing wrong, is there, Annie?" questioned her mistress, noting the girl's red eyes and alarmed manner.

"Well, Miss," answered Annie, twisting and untwisting one end of her apron string nervously, "the one nurse do be packin' up to leave immedjit an' t'other one's cryin' her head off in a corner an' your father's swearin' somethin' fearful an' sez he do be goin' to discharge the doctors an' all the servants, an' wants to know wher' you be, Miss, an' if so be you're entertainin' any fool company an' not lookin' after him, an' I sez no, you ain't, not as I knows on, an' outside of that ther' ain't nothin' wrong, Miss, 'ceptin' you father called me a brainless hussy, Miss, which I ain't an' never was!"

Annie's words came tumbling one over the other in breathless speed. Then, her outraged feelings proving too much for her, she burst into tears and made a hasty exit.

"You see how it is, dear," said Milly. "Dad's in one of his tantrums and I'm the only one who can manage him. We'll have to wait until he's in a better humor before I can show him this."

Milly pressed her lips to the solitaire that Ted had just placed on her finger, and with a parting kiss and "Good luck, Teddy-boy," ran off to soothe her irascible parent.

TED left the Derwent home and turned his footsteps toward his uncle's laboratory. This laboratory was a thorn in the flesh to Mr. Derwent. Some ten years before Derwent had decided to erect a mansion on one of the most desirable building sites in Shelby. To that end he had negotiated the purchase of the entire block. He acquired title to all of the land excepting one corner, some 25x50 feet. Altho Derwent offered ten times more than its value for this little piece of property, his overtures were refused point-blank, the reason being that the owner was no other than Billy Carson. A ramshackle building, unpainted and poverty-stricken in appearance, ocupied this coveted plot of ground, and proved a daily eyesore to the Derwent family, especially since Carson had taken it into his head to use this old shanty for a chemical laboratory and workshop.

Several moving picture companies had studios near Shelby and Billy Carson made a point of becoming friendly with their location directors and offering them free and unlimited use of his dilapidated structure for scenic purposes. Naturally, when the lovely heroine was being rescued by the gallant hero from the upper window of the deserted cabin, where, bound hand and foot, she had been left to starve, all the idlers and urchins in town would congregate around the Derwent block, peering over the low stone walls and violating the privacy of the wealthy owner's beautiful grounds.

Finally, the camera man finished and the last scene shot, the air would be rent by wild shrieks and hideous hootings, as Carson would throw a handful of pennies into the screaming, scrambling, struggling mob of children, eagerly awaiting this expected largess. As Mr. Derwent had been born with a decided dent where his bump of humor should have been located, these merry pranks only served to throw him into fits of apoplectic rage, when he would threaten to burn Carson's hated laboratory to the ground. All of which might have happened, had not Carson taken pains to let Mr. Derwent know that certain high explosives in the shanty might have power to wreck the nearby mansion and all of its occupants in case of sudden conflagration.

James Derwent and William Carson had fought and quarreled all thru their school days and later on had been rivals for the love of the same girl. Derwent won and married her. William left town to take a post-graduate course in chemistry. Then Milly was still a baby, Carson returned and took up his permanent abode in Shelby, and from that day devoted his life apparently to annoying Derwent in every possible way. Residents of Shelby looked on and laughed. Diverting pastime was thus provided them, as they gleefully related what their eccentric townsman had been doing rerently to harass his influential and wealthy neighbor.

As Ted entered the laboratory, William Carson jumped up from amongst a heterogeneous collection of funnels, retorts and graduated glasses.

"Well, I declare! If it isn't Teddy! Let's look at you, boy."

The shrewd, blue eyes, a humorous twinkle in their depths, glanced approvingly at the handsome youngster and admiringly noted every line of his stalwart, physical manliness.

"All dressed up in New York duds, too. H'm! You'll be cutting quite a dash with all the gals around town now, won't you?"

William Carson winked slyly as he polished his old-fashioned, steel-rimmed spectacles.

"There's only one girl for me, Uncle William, and you know who she is," answered Ted.

"H'm! Well, I don't know," drawled Carson, "But I don't think you stand much chance of getting her, if you mean little Milly Derwent. 'Tenny rate, not just now."

A humorous grin, not entirely free from malice, brought all the crinkles and creases in his wrinkled face into play.

TEDDY cautiously tested the resisting power of a decrepit-looking chair. Making himself as comfortable as that piece of furniture would permit, he looked his uncle squarely in the eye.

"Let's get down to cases, Uncle Will. Exactly what is this fraudulent scheme that you're putting over on the gas company?"

"Did old Derwent put you up to ask that? Is that the price he wants for his daughter?" sneered Carson in answer.

"Look here, Uncle William, I haven't seen Mr. Derwent, but I've heard about the capers you're cutting with the gas meters. Don't you know that your action is criminal?"

William Carson chuckled. "Not criminal, simply chemical, my boy."

"It's a wonder that Mr. Derwent doesn't prosecute you," remarked Ted, hoping to frighten his uncle.

"Prosecute me!" laughed Carson. "What for, I'd like to know? No one can prove that I tamper in any way with the property of the Gas Company. In fact, the reports of the experts are all the other way."

"You know that you're putting over some chemical fraud, Uncle Billy, and if you won't tell me what it is, I'm going to find out for myself, that's all," announced Ted.

"It's too late now for you to become interested in chemistry," said Carson. "You remember that I wanted you to take a course in my profession, but you preferred journalism and newspaper work. If you had done as I wished, all my secrets would be an open book to you now. Let's change the subject. Tell me about your New York visit."

"There's nothing more than I told you in my letters, Uncle Billy. After grandfather died, I had to remain and settle up a lot of things and be at the beck and call of his lawyers. Do you know that grandfather's estate was appraised at over a quarter of a million and I'm the sole heir?"

"It's about time your father's folks recognized your existence! That old skinflint who's just died left my poor sister and her husband—your mother and father—in actual want. I don't know what would have happened to you—poor, little shaver, you were—if I hadn't sort of adopted you when your parents died."

The twinkling blue eyes grew dim for a moment. The old man removed and vigorously polished his spectacles.

"Dear old Uncle William!" murmured Ted, rising and placing his arm affectionately about Carson's stooping shoulders. "You know how grateful I am."

"H'm! Let's talk of something else," briskly from the chemist, who pretended to abhor sentiment. "I've good news, too. Look at this," giving his nephew a letter to read.

"By Jove, Uncle Billy, this is some offer! The position of head chemist at the Tullerton Laboratories! How did you get this?"

"Oh, they've been using my formula for years. They've wanted me long ago,

(Continued on Page 17.)

"Dad, as President and Chief Stockholder of the Gas Company, Took a Hand in the Affair. Experts in Chemistry, Locks and Meters Were Brought From All Over the Country, but So Far Nothing Has Been Discovered."

# Eric Strongbow

By J. C. Kofoed

## Read This Outline First

**ERIC STRONGBOW,** a Viking of the Eighth Century, blond, fearless and stalwart, defied his father,

**VISBUR JARL,** who wished to force Eric into marriage with

**SNOWFRID,** the beautiful but cold, unresponsive daughter of

**THE EARL OF ORKNEY.** Altho submitting to his father's will in going thru with the betrothal ceremony, Eric complied dully with no joy in his heart, for he knew that the maiden loved

**OLAF,** the young bard of the Danish kingdom. Eric was about to make a trip to Ireland bent on conquest with

**THE THUNDERER, THORGILS,** who hoped to capture the daughter of the King of Ireland. Eric, himself, desired to seize the crown of the King, and if he succeeded, his father promised that he would grant anything his son desired, and Eric determined to ask to be freed from his betrothal.

When the Vikings arrived in Ireland, a fierce battle ensued in which the brother of Eric,

**HELVIN,** was slain. Eric swore to revenge himself upon Malachy, the King of Ireland, who had killed Helvin; in the heat of his anger, accompanied by

**RAEL, A SKRAELLING,** whose life he had saved, Eric captured the daughter of the Irish kingdom for the Thunderer, who desired to possess her. When he found himself alone with

**EILEEN,** his beautiful prisoner, Eric could not prevent love from surging thru his heart and instead of giving her over to Thorgils, he fought for her possession and won the battle. Together he and Eileen, followed by Rael, fled in a chariot, but were attacked by Irish warriors in the midst of a dense wood. Just as Strongbow was about to be overpowered by the warriors of her father, Eileen prevailed upon them to grant him his life and ordered him carried to the palace, where he was nursed back to consciousness. When he had recovered somewhat from his wounds, the King,

**MALACHY,** sent for him. Eric frankly denounced the High King for murdering Helvin and confessed his love for the beautiful Eileen, who sat at the right hand of her father. Malachy asked her kindly if it were true that she loved Strongbow, and when she admitted it the King gave his consent to the marriage, knowing that it would bind the two warring countries together. It was now impossible for Eric to keep his vow to carry back Malachy's crown, and this act was the only means he had of freeing himself from his promise to wed Snowfrid.

**THORGILS** made another attack upon the King's domain and in the slaughter the Thunderer was sent to his death by Rael and Malachy also was killed.

This story began in No. 29, the Ledger for July 17. Back copies may be obtained from our agents or newsdealers.

### CHAPTER VIII.
### OF THE RACE THAT ERIC STROVE TO WIN.

EILEEN, her breath coming in quick gasps, watched the swaying terror of the battle that raged like a flood of death beneath her. In the intervals, when the strain of excitement loosened a bit, she prayed incoherently. She could not tear her eyes from the murderous conflict. The flash of battle-ax and sword, the shrill wolflike yelp of the Danes, the blood and insane fury bound her with a fascination that she could not break. The events of the past week had shattered much of the cool reserve with which the Princess carried herself, and now she was white and trembling.

Her father, gallant King Malachy, raged among the Vikings until he was sick to the bone with weariness, his sword clotted, his armor smeared and dented. But against a soldiery as brave, ferocious and stubborn, as slow to admit themselves beaten as these Danes, his efforts were unavailing, and again the men of Innes-Fail were swept back in the hopeless chaos of defeat.

Incongruous as it may seem, it was the death of her parent that brought back Eileen's cool wits. When the ax of Thorgils severed the monarch's soul from his wounded body it brought to the girl, with all the horror of grief, a realization that she now stood to the harried people of Ireland as the only concrete embodiment of power. For their sake, if not for her own, she must frustrate the Thunderer by escaping.

For one desperate instant she lingered by the window, watching. When the sea king hurled his huge bulk thru the shattered keep, she sped swiftly down the narrow passageway that had entrance to her room, and thence on noiseless feet to the scullery. The place was empty, for all had long since fled, and the deserted room, with its array of brass and earthen kettles, seemed indescribably lonely. Her cheeks were wet with tears, and she wished that Eric was here to aid her with his mighty strength and soothing love. But there was time for no vain repinings, for nothing but flight. Bending low, to avoid being seen, she ran to the stables, panting in her haste. If only the horses were there she might escape the hideous arms of the Thunderer.

Two leering, helmeted heads rose from behind the thorny tangle of bushes, two pairs of calloused hands gripped her, two harsh voices growled an order to be silent. Tho she struggled with all her young strength, Eileen was as helpless in their hands as a babe would have been in the mighty grip of Thor. Only half-conscious, she was carried to the roadside and flung roughly to the floor of the very chariot in which Strongbow had borne her from the feast hall of the High King of Innes-Fail.

One of the rovers lashed the horses into a gallop, and back they tore over the rutted forest road. But one spot could be their destination, and that was the camp of the Danish invaders. The men talked together as they rode, and the message they conveyed in high-pitched voices was anything but reassuring to Eileen's listening ears.

"Thorgils must of a certainty have the power of second sight," growled one, "for how else would he have sent us where he did? By the might of Thor! had we been elsewhere placed the maid would have flown to safety."

The driver nodded. "Never have I seen the Thunderer so distraught. 'Tis by the sickness of love he has been stricken, I'll swear."

"Were I Thorgils I should not trouble so over a Princess of Ireland. That he should ever keep his fastest galley in readiness to carry her to Denmark is a mad thing——"

"Thou hast said enough, Heglar," muttered the other. "The Thunderer would have thy tongue for that, and even in this wilderness some one may hear."

FOR a long time the only sound that rattled thru the forest was the solid drumming of the horses' hoofs. The Vikings, their heavy, brutal faces lined with weariness, nodded. Thru the stillness Eileen seemed to hear a faint thunder on the road behind—or was it but an echo of their own mad flight? If only Eric and his mighty henchman would come! Where, in the name of the gods, were they?

Grief for the death of her father; anxiety for the handsome Viking she had learned so quickly to love brought the hot tears to her eyes. Thru the long hours they pounded along the forest way, she crouched on the chariot's battered floor and sobbed her heart out on its roughened boards. She was no longer a daring Amazon, ready to face dangers unnumbered, but a weary, helpless girl, weeping for the loss of kin, home and country. Nearer and nearer she heard the beat of the surf, rolling ponderously like bells for the dying, and it frightened her even more. Once aboard the galley all hope of rescue was lost. But the only answer to her strangled plea was the faint echo of hoofs on the road that stretched to the scarred castle of the King.

The galleys of the Thunderer were lying in the cove, huddled by the shore like a flock of ravens about carrion. They were deserted save for the rower-thralls, and scarce a single Viking to a ship. To the largest of these the abductors bore the Princess of Ireland, respectfully arranged an impromptu cabin as comfortably as their clumsy hands could, and begged her to ask for whatever she might crave. Apparently they realized that, as she was such a favorite of the Thunderer's, she might cause them illimitable trouble, if she would. They knew Thorgils, did these men, and feared his slightest frown, else might Eileen have fared as a doe among stag hounds.

Then out oars, and with a dozen lusty pulls they flashed out on the broad span of the ocean, with the moon weaving a straight, white ribbon before them. On they shot, gliding like a phantom over the scarcely perceptible waves. On the shadow-bound shore there arose a sharp, fierce shout, dulled by distance as it floated across the water, an interval filled with meaningless, confused sound, and then a high-peaked galley, flying the Raven on its prow, sped out into the silver moonlight.

Heglar, in the stern, peered anxiously behind, muttering maledictions thru the depths of his beard.

"What makest thou of it?" asked his comrade.

"Who but hot-headed Eric Strongbow!" snarled the other. "Did he not fight the Berserker for this maid? By the hammer of Thor! I can but love his daring, even tho I would send him flying to Hela's abode if the strength were in me."

Eric! Eileen started up, her hands at her breast. Who else could it be but the daring, yellow-haired rover? If any could save her he was surely the man. Her hope rose with the rhythmic fall and rise of the boat until she clasped her hands in sudden exultation.

Thru many days and nights the rowers worked at the oars, half of them resting while their mates pulled and tugged, but always the sharp-nosed galley hung within sight. Trouble came on the eighth day. The sun rose, crept across the hazy, cloud-filled sky, and the smaller boat drew nearer inch by inch. At three hours past noon they were within hailing distance, and Eileen could see Strongbow in the prow, leaning tensely forward, as tho by the fiery force of his will he would fling his ship ahead at even greater speed.

"THOU in the Thunderer's galley," he shouted. "As thou hope for Valhalla, stand and deliver the Princess to me."

Heglar's face crinkled into a savage grin. "She is for my master, Thorgils, the Thunderer, and not for thee."

"Thy master is dead, as thou wilt shortly be if thou failest to do as I command. Here is a sign that I speak sooth." Eric held aloft the massive golden chain he had torn from his enemy's neck, and the Viking recognized it. But he came of a bitter breed, and to surrender what he had gained rubbed wrongwise his feelings.

"By Fenris the Wolfe I swear that if Thorgils is not to have her she shall die as a sacrifice to Thor," he scowled. "Let the priests do their worst with her." He cast an evilly oblique glance at the cloud-packed sky and the racing fury of the wind.

"Come and take her thyself, Strongbow," Heglar shouted, as the storm burst upon them, "for I shall never give her to thee."

For an instant, under the sudden, desperate spurt of Eric's thralls, the galleys almost touched, and then the frightful strength of the sea hurled them apart, and a sheet of rain sprang like a curtain between them.

### CHAPTER IX.
### OF THE MIGHTY STORM AND THE NEWS THAT VISBUR JARL HAD TO TELL.

AS THE galley disappeared in the sheet of drenching rain Eric kept his place at the prow, and strove to pierce the sudden darkness with the eyes of a hawk. But the stocky thralls at the oars were wearied to the point of exhaustion by the long chase, and dropped pantingly in their seats. Then, too, the frightful roar of the wind, the crashes of thunder and the jagged flashes of lightning seared their very soul with terror. The galley rolled upon the heaving waves, but moved forward not an inch.

Bitter rage was in Strongbow's heart, but none would have suspected it from his placid face. He had long ago learned the folly of unrestrained emotion, and both anger and joy were always curbed with an iron hand. The sting of defeat was no less keen. Tho he had failed to save Eileen from the hands of her enemy he swore that the end was not yet.

Rael cast an anxious glance about him. The wind was almost a hurricane, the waves were tossing the stanch little galley about like a cork. In the murky darkness the pale faces of the thralls were suddenly ghastly.

"Lord," shouted the Skraelling over the roar of the wind, "we are close to destruction. What are thy commands?"

Eric looked up from his moody reverie, but his eyes did not rest on his follower's face. They flashed past in startled surprise. A mountain of green water was piling above them, its foamy crest apparently hidden by the clouds. For a moment it seemed to pause in its downward rush, and in that infinitesimal fraction of time the Viking had time to read the fear in the stone hard features of the rowers as they realized how tiny and helpless they were to combat the awful strength of the sea.

Strongbow muttered a prayer to his gods, the thralls screamed frantically to Odin, and then the water came piling down in an overwhelming flood. The galley tried to ride it but was battered under, and Eric found himself hurled strangling and dazed under its mighty rush.

Love of life, the thought of Eileen's helplessness and her need of him made the Dane fight like a madman until he reached the icy surface. The galley was rolling in the trough of the sea, her decks washed clear of all that was human. Swimming strongly, Eric reached it and dragged himself aboard. With numbed fingers he fastened a rope about his waist and half dazed, sprawled helpless on the wet deck. How long it was before his heavy lids opened he never knew, but when they did Rael lay inert by his side, and the sea, tho heaving stormily, had lost much of its violence.

Strongbow straightened his aching body, and shook the Skraelling roughly. "Rael, Rael, awaken thou. By the mercy of the gods we are spared."

By an effort the other sat erect. His crisp beard was limp and discouraged by the salt water; there was a gash across his forehead where he had come in contact with the galley's gunwale. He cast a glance across the battered deck, another at the empty seats and crushed cars.

"Thou art right, lord," he muttered, "but our adventures are not done. The fishes may have the picking of us yet. 'Tis true that the storm is chasing to the south, but for aught we know we may be a hundred miles from Denmark's shore. The cars are gone, the sail ripped to tatters." He shrugged his shoulders with characteristic stolidity. "When the huge waves buffeted me overboard I was prepared to die, and when another washed me back I thanked Thor for his mercy. Nothing save the Priests of Thor is so cruel as the sea, but it has us not yet. Tho, so far as I see, there is little for us to do."

ERIC cast a sea-wise eye at the heavens, obscured by flying scud. The storm was indeed passed, but in passing it had wreaked a stern vengeance upon them. Night came slipping down, and for nearly a dozen hours they would be at the mercy of wind and wave before they could use the sight the gods had given them.

A deep and sincere fatalism is usually ingrained in the character of men who carry on the precarious trade of war, so it was with little forebodings that Strongbow, wrapped in his soaked blanket, stretched out on one of the rower's seats. Rael, like a faithful hound, curled up beside him, chin on knees, his keen eyes ever watching.

Tho he lay quiet it was long before sleep came to the eyes of Eric, the Jarl's son. His given word might forever bar him from union with the Princess of the Isle of Destiny, but no promise could ever tear her image from his heart. A purer, more unselfish love never burned in any man, whether pagan or Christian. He wondered what Thorgils' brutes would do with her when the galley landed—and a throb of fear checked the beat of his heart. What if it did not land, if the storm had raked it as theirs had been raked?

But reason argued otherwise. The Thunderer's ship was so big and strong and seaworthy that it could endure almost endless hammering. They must have landed safely! Then the sinister, bearded face of the High-Priest of Thor flashed before Eric in the darkness, and he struggled erect, hand on knife. What had brought that devil's mask of a visage to haunt him? For hours, before the weight of fatigue closed his heavy lids, he wondered and wondered, but no decision came to cease his harassed thoughts.

The glare of the sun on his eyes awoke Strongbow. Now was the time to work if ever they were to save themselves, for the sea was calm as an inland lake. Then he glanced up, and his shout of joy brought Rael up with a bound, rubbing his sleep-mazed eyes. For there, flattened against the sun-shot blue of the sky, were the gray cliffs of his home. And, dancing out across the water, came a boat manned by a single oarsman.

As became a chief of noble blood, Eric stood in the prow of his dismantled galley, arms folded, watching the strong strokes of the rower that sent the skiff shooting thru the water like a salmon. There was something familiar about the man, and suddenly Strongbow slapped his hand upon his thigh with a smothered exclamation.

"It is Olaf the Scald, Snowfrid's lover!"

The boat grated against the side of the galley, and the songmaker glanced up into Eric's eyes. He had none of the Viking's immobility, and his jaw dropped in sheer astonishment.

"Is—is it thou, Eric?" he gasped.

"Aye," and then unable to restrain his impatience, "Knowest thou if the Thunderer's galley hath landed?"

Tho Strongbow's voice was as expressionless as his face, Olaf must have read the anxiety under its even timbre, for his face was questioning as he nodded.

"Thorgils' own ship, with half her men lost in the storm——"

"Had they prisoners?"

"The daughter of the King of Ireland, for whom thou fought the Thunderer."

"Knowest thou that?"

"I know, too, that Thorgils' men have sworn on oath against thee, for only the thralls are left, and they cannot raise voice."

Eric felt a sudden tremor of relie His actions might have brought again

him a decree of outlawry, but his fight would now be regarded as honorable single combat. In spite of his delight, anxiety for Eileen kept the shadow on his brow.

Leaning over the side of the galley, his hand clutched the shoulder of the Scald, and his eyes of ice stared into the milder ones of the other. "And what of the maid, Olaf?" he asked. "As thou hope for entrance to Valhalla, tell me of the maid."

A flash of understanding and hope lit the songmaker's face. "Dost thou love her?"

Outraged pride stiffened the Viking. "Since when hast thou learned to question thy betters?" he demanded hotly. But the songmaker read aright the flush in Strongbow's tanned cheeks. Then his lips drooped sadly, and with a sudden gesture he held out his hand.

"Forget the bonds of caste for but a moment," the poet said softly. "I know thou lovest the daughter of the Ard-Righ, and for that reason I tremble to tell thee what I must."

"Speak," said Eric evenly.

"They have given her to the Priests of Thor, and at the setting of the sun this night they will hurl her over Runic Rock as a sacrifice to the God of Battles—and as vengeance on thee."

Strongbow stood tensely there in the prow of the galley, his eyes fixed almost uncomprehendingly on the white face of the Scald, unaware of Rael's grip on his arm. In that moment he saw Eileen in the hairy hands of the High-Priest, shrinking back from the gulf, the clamor of the surf loud in her ears. It filled his soul with such a loathing and hatred that the fire of passion burst from the barrier of control.

"If the temple of the Priests of Thor roar up in smoke and flame I swear that she shall not die on the Runic Rock," he cried harshly. Like a mask the emotionless expression smoothed his features, and without a word he swung himself over the side and dropped into the rowboat. Rael followed, taking the oars from Olaf's hands at a curt word of command from his master.

Chin on palm, his corn-colored hair shading vacant eyes, Eric sat staring over the ocean. Behind him the galley tossed like a gaunt skeleton, uneasy and fearful at being left. To the Viking the ship he had quitted was a typification of his lost hopes. And his young face became so bitterly stern that it sealed Olaf's half-opened lips, even when he started to speak.

An hour later Strongbow was back in his father's home, and had told his Odyssey. He did not mention the crown he had come so near gaining, and the sacrifice he had made for honor's sake. When he ceased speaking, Visbur Jarl leaned back in his high seat, head bent, saying nothing. And so they waited, this Viking father and son, in the silence that was characteristic of them both.

"When Olaf the Scald brought thee from the galley said he nothing of Snowfrid, daughter of the Earl of Orkney?" asked the Jarl at last, his lips tightening.

"Nothing."

"Art thou sure, Eric?"

"Yea."

Again the nobleman relaxed into moody silence, and then, with an angry sweep of his hand, leaned forward. "In spite of the betrothal that was pledged ere thou left for Ireland, Snowfrid wed Olaf the Scald not six days gone."

CHAPTER X.

OF THE FINAL SACRIFICE AND HOW A VIKING ENTERED VALHALLA.

"HATH Snowfrid wed the songmaker?" cried Eric, his eyes lighting with sudden gladness.

Visbur Jarl nodded gloomily. "'Tis strange how a woman can forget her vows when she loves. Now thou art free of thy word, and if I readest thee right the news is aught but displeasing to thee."

"Displeasing!" Strongblow smiled whitely. "I could hear no news that would give me greater joy."

He turned away, then came back and dropped on a stool by the blazing hearth. "Jarl, what thou hast told me hath made me a free man. Now I wish to take counsel with thee, both as father and ruler. I love the Princess Eileen, whom the Priests of Thor hath consecrated as a sacrifice——"

There was no change in Visbur Jarl's snowy, bearded face, and but for the sudden clinching of his hands none would have guessed with what stunning force the revelation struck him.

"The daughter of the King of Innes-Fail when thou couldst have thy choice of a score of northland princesses!"

"Love takes no account of race," returned the Viking, quietly. "Can'st thou not, for my sake, spare her the ordeal of the Runic Rock? Thy word is law to all here?"

"Not to the priests, Eric." The old nobleman laid a hand affectionately on his son's shoulder. "The words of the gods are as far above mine as mine is above a thrall's. I am helpless, and if the Princess Eileen is not to be hurled over the Runic Rock one who loves her better than life must be the sacrifice in her stead——"

Strongbow rose. "Then I shall be the sacrifice to appease the wrath of the War God."

"You!" cried the Jarl hoarsely.

"Even I. Am I so churl that I should fear to die for one I love? Nay, father. The son of Visbur Jarl hath blood, not water in his veins."

His hands gripped the shaking ones of the old ruler. "Promise that thy protection shall cloak her until her kinspeople have her in their midst. Then I shall go with a light heart. Promise."

"By the might of Thor—I promise," came from Visbur's white lips.

With a gay salute the Viking turned, squaring his mighty shoulders, and left his father's hall. Now that he knew he might save Eileen by sacrifice of his own body he felt almost joyful. Helmeted head bent, he strode on, and ever to hearten him there came to his vision the small, regal head of the girl for whom he cared so deeply. How often had he scoffed at the tales of love the Scalds had sung in the feasting hall, but now—he realized what it was that made dainty beausires of courtmen go down to the oblivion of death for a smile from a woman's lips. It was the passion that makes a god of a brute, that carries him from uttermost degradation to the pinnacle of bravery and devotion.

ERIC spent the early afternoon in polishing his arms, tempering the edge of his sword, and often losing himself in reverie to start at the golden future he had once thought was possible. He said nothing of his intention to Rael, and that burly fellow chirped and whistled contentedly as he worked by his master's side. The sun had begun to sink behind the silver trunk birches when Stronbow, with the Skraelling at his back, faced toward the temple of the Priests of Thor, there to make the sacrifice that would prove the depths of his love for the daughter of the Ard-Righ. He walked slowly, breathing in the sweet forest air with all the avidity of one who will never taste it again. Then, thru the trees loomed the ominous, lichen-covered buildings, crouching like a wounded beast on the bare rocks.

Hardly had the Vikings quitted the shelter of the woods when the door of the temple was flung open, and a procession issued forth. In the midst of it walked Eileen, her black hair rippling to her waist, her arms bound by heavy cords.

Eric's stern face flushed, and his hand fell to his sword hilt. With a few strides he reached the sinister, weazened High Priest, who had threatened him on the day of his betrothal.

"What means this, churl?"

"Interefere not with that which concerns thee not, Jarl's son," cried the other fiercely. "I swore that thy best beloved should requite thy insult to Thor's honor."

"Thou cannot refuse one who would die in her stead?"

"Nay."

With a laugh, Eric Strongbow drew his sword, and flung it at the priest's feet. "Then she shall be saved. I will take her place. Is that right in thy eyes?"

The guardian of the temple peered up into Eric's handsome face, at the golden hair peeping under the raven crested helmet, at the tremendous sweep of shoulder under the steel byrnie. Ah, what a sacrifice to the Iron God, and what a balm to his own warped feelings! He inclined his head in sneering acceptance.

"Thou shalt not, Eric," cried Eileen, struggling with the men who held her. "Oh, why wilt thou do this mad thing?"

"That you mayst live," said Strongbow gently. "May the Gods watch over and guard thee. Rael, I charge thee with her safety. Cease not thy vigilance until she is safely back with her people."

"Nay, lord, it is a trust I will not take."

Eric stared unbelievingly at the burly Skraelling. That the man who had been his faithful follower, who had risked his life many times for him, should deny what was asked in Strongbow's last moment on earth was incredible.

"Thou refuse't?"

"Dost remember the day in the palace of Ireland's High King when we stood together over the body of Thorgils the Thunderer? Then thou said to me, 'Whatever thou may ask of me that shall I grant.'"

Strongbow nodded.

"Then," and the Skraelling's eyes flashed with unalterable determination, "I ask that thou let me take thy place, so thou mayest fulfil this trust of the Princess Eileen myself."

"Nay, I cannot."

"Thy promise!"

"But, Rael," cried Strongbow, taking a step forward and stretching out his hand, "thou are my friend. We have slept and fought and eaten together. Am I so thrall that I should let thee die that I might live?" He gripped the other's tanned fist crushingly. "Nay."

"THOU hast much to live for, I nothing," said the Skraelling quietly. "Act not the part of a fool. I hold thee to thy promise. Release the maiden, priest. I am the sacrifice to the God of Battles."

With Eileen's trembling hands clinging to him, his own keen blue eyes clouded with mist, Eric, the Jarl's son, watched his comrade walk steadily to the edge of the Runic Rock. A hundred feet below the unyielding surf battered at its dun gray sheerness, and its foamy fingers seemed to stretch hingrily up for Rael's body.

The sun, cutting thru the clouds with a million irridescent splinters of light, bathed his steel-clad body in flames. Sacrifice makes all men noble, and the knowledge of it lit the Skraelling's face with a wonderful light. His bearded lips curled back from his teeth as he watched Eric and Eileen adoringly.

The splendid strength of his comrade's devotion drew Strongbow forward in anguished remonstrance. "Word or no, Rael, I cannot let thee."

"It is too late, lord," said the Viking. "May Thor welcome me into Valhalla this night!"

With the spring of a cat he leaped into dizzy space, arms outstretched to balance him. For an instant his shining armored body might have been painted there against the heavens, then he dropped like a plummet to the depths below.

His mighty form shaken with emotion, Eric turned his back on the thundering roar of the sea. Unmindful of the Priests or Thor, his arms went about Eileen's slender body and his blue eyes searched her face. When he spoke his voice was soft and thrilling with earnestness.

"As Rael the Skraelling died that I might live, so I hold myself ever ready to do for thee. The Valkyria have piloted us thru many troubled waters, but they are all behind. Wilt thou wed me now, my Queen of the Isle of Destiny?"

Eileen, her beautiful face, with its crown of midnight air, pressed against Strongbow's steel byrnie, spoke not, but crept closer within his protecting embrace.

The End.

* * *

**All Over.**

Hearing a crash of glassware one morning, Mrs. Blank called to her maid in the adjoining room, "Norah, what on earth are you doing?"

"I'm doin' nothin', mum," replied Norah; "it's done."

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# The Riddle of the Flying Hands

by HAZEL GOODWIN KEELER
Author of "The Vault Clue" Etc.

COMPLETE IN THIS NUMBER

"YOU say you saw only his hands, Miss Gem?"

"Yes—or it would be more exact to say I saw only a pair of hands playing or groping in the moonlight about the wall—there—at the side of my dressing-table."

"And you, Mrs. Gem, did you see the intruder?"

"Bless me, no, Mr. Sheffield. Just a pair of the most horrible yellow hands I have ever seen. I had been dozing in my chair at the table in the living-room when I must have fallen off to sleep. It seemed I had been hearing something at the door for a long time when I awoke, but in this large apartment building one gets used to things like that, you know. I heard the clock strike 2 and there was a rustle near me. 'Is that you, baby?' I called to my daughter, who had long before retired. And as I did so, I saw these hands approaching me in the semi-light from the night bulb in this low table-lamp. They sprang at me—I felt terrific blows on my head and knew no more until baby found me."

Inspector Josman Sheffield, having noted these facts, again turned to Mrs. Gem's daughter, Louise—a charming bit of gentleness and soft beauty.

"And so, Miss Gem," he said, "when you heard your mother call——"

"I did not hear her call, exactly, but I heard a commotion in the living-room. I opened my eyes and, by the moonlight that poured in thru this window, I could see some one's hands feeling over a part of the wall. I do not know why I did it, but I reached for the electric light switch, turning on the light. The room was no sooner flooded with it than the hands, and their owner, too, were gone; for I found the hall door open and mother unconscious on the floor in the living-room."

"And, then, I take it, the people across the hall heard you scream and came in, and soon the police were here. Now, with your permission, we will see the wall where these hands were groping."

Sheffield and his friend Carter were shown into a heavenly little bedroom that was peeking with paradise blue. There were little pale blue Persian silk rugs, a tiny mahogany bed, its spindle posts exalting themselves ceiling-high over the charge of shimmering blue taffeta. The one window in this room was heavily shrouded with filet and taffeta drapes and lambrequins. The dresser, with its dainty charge of silver, stood at the wall opposite the side of the bed. A dressing-table with two blue-silk shaded lamps, looped with silken fringes and spotted with motifs of real lace, held the wall opposite the foot of the bed. The doorway into the rest of the apartment was at the side of the dressing-table. Just inside the doorway, also on this wall, was indeed evidence of last night's visit in the shape of a long, lean hand mark.

Sheffield eyed it with a look of the most absorbed astonishment. From his pocket he withdrew a small reading glass and studied the prints, each in turn. His small, kindly black eyes became piercing as he scrutinized every detail. "These," he said to Carter, his young colleague, as he dropped the hand glass back in his pocket, "are the lines of London Johnnie Corp."

"Why, that famous crook," replied Carter, "went down on the 'City of Ottumwa' only two weeks ago in Lake Michigan, did he not?"

"Of course he did. He was trying to make a grand exit to Canada, I have good reason to remember, for I was waiting to pounce upon him at Mackinac Island when the ship was cloven and only a few of the women were saved. His body was picked up the day after the disaster, right near Chicago, here."

Sheffield turned to Miss Gem.

"This mark was not upon your wall previous to last night?"

"No," she assured him. "I should certainly have seen it. It attracted my eyes the very first thing this morning. I can assure you that it is absolutely new and strange; that it was not there when I went to bed last night."

The two men gazed at each other.

"A dead man cannot get up from his grave and rob wall safes," proffered Sheffield.

"Maybe he worked the lady's night dress stunt and got rowed off with the women," said Carter. "Or it may have been some other body they picked up."

"Excepting," put in Sheffield, "that we took the dead man's fingerprints to close up his record for good. No need to tell you, of course, Carter, that fingerprint lines remain engraved upon the fingers after death until the very flesh falls into powder; and that no two individuals have ever been found to have fingerprints alike. And yet I could almost swear that, when we go down to the bureau of identification we shall be told that these are unequivocally London Johnnie Corp's fingerprints. Could it be—could it be—that our old fingerprint law is, after all, to prove unsafe?—that there can be two individuals with identical fingerprints? But it has not been proved yet! I cannot believe it. Still——"

Sheffield examined the mark on the wall again.

"I suppose this wall is pretty bright with the moon full upon it," he commented. "I say! Interesting face—this."

STOOPING he took from the floor under the dressing-table a small photograph. But as he did so the young girl started, flushingly.

"A lad I know; that is—I used to know him."

"Why, Louise!" exclaimed Mrs. Gem. "Coleman Algers!"

"As I Live, Carter! The Plans of the Boyle Rapid Firer."

The young woman made an uneasy movement as the other woman continued.

"You wonder now that I did not approve of your friendship with him?"

"No—no, mother! That is a photograph he gave me. I had it tacked at the back of my dressing-table. The burglar must have knocked it down."

"Oh, I knew he would try to harm us some day," and the woman started a series of hysterical denunciations.

"If you please, Mrs. Gem. You suspect this young man of being the intruder of last night?" asked Sheffield.

"What better evidence can you have?" she replied.

"Oh, mother, I know Coleman has nothing whatever to do with this. I really had this picture at the back of my dressing-table. Maybe—maybe——"

The girl thought in desperation for some moments. "Maybe it was that man who had this apartment before us—some misunderstanding about our being tenants!"

"You know he died, Louise."

"But why couldn't it have been just a plain burglar?"

Here Sheffield spoke.

"I am afraid," he said gently, "that such a burglar as this man seems to have been would have had his license revoked by his fraternity long ago. Take for example this handprint! In all my experience, I have never encountered a professional burglar who was madman enough to leave a piece of blatant evidence like that!"

As Sheffield measured these phrases out in his circular manner of gesticulation, he hit the handprint many times with the edges of his finger-nails. As he finished, he gave the wall a little whack somewhat below the mark. Hereupon, his kindly, penetrative black eyes became vibrantly concentrative and his lank features became obsessed with uncommon animation. He rapped upon the wall repeatedly, listening earnestly. His companion, Carter, and the two tenants watched with bated breath.

"You have no safe here in this wall, Mrs. Gem?—No?—But I believe one is located here. Carter, let's move this piece of furniture a bit. So! Here are two coats of wall paper! Under them—yes—as I expected, the plaster is besmeared considerably. Let us scrape away this unsightly patch of it. Ah! it falls out in chunks; nicely fitted chunks! And here within are some documents. Gun plans, eh?—Gun pla—— As I live, Carter! The plans of the Boyle Rapid Firer!"

HOWEVER electrifying this statement upon Carter, Sheffield proceeded pauselessly.

"Now, Mrs. Gem," he said, "two significant questions, if you please. First, would the hands, in your estimation, be those of an—er—Japanese? And second, let us hear about the previous occupant of your apartment."

The account was not particularly singular. The hands had been "horrible, yellow hands." As for the previous occupant: A man had rented the apartment upon completion of the building the spring before; had shown himself very seldom, and was nowhere to be found at the expiration of the lease. He had paid his rent quarterly by money order, and no one had seen him for weeks, when it came to an issue and new tenants had to be given the apartment. Nor did the agent get any replies to his letters, for they were found unopened in the man's mail box. The little furniture and few personal effects he had had never been called for after the flat had been rented to the Gems. From descriptions, however, it was supposed that he was the man who had been run down by an automobile at about the time of the tenant's last disappearance, and who had died. The facts were scraped together so long afterward, however, they were of the barest kind.

A visit to the agent of the building supplemented these statements with the facts that the man's name was John Barcole; that he was a bachelor, that no one had ever been known to come to see him or inquire about him and that his mail, if he received any, did not come to the house. His effects were advertised and then sold, and the flat redecorated for occupancy by its present tenants.

"Well, one thing is certain," remarked Sheffield, "the stolen plans of the Boyle Rapid Firer have been found."

"Gad! man," replied Carter, "but there was sweating over that thing in Government circles when they thought Japan or Mexico might have gotten them." Then, suddenly, from the corner of his eye, he surveyed Sheffield's hands and began to ponder.

## CHAPTER II.

IT WAS still early that morning when a cautious little form stepped from the be-palmed and carpeted marble entrance of the apartment building where the Gems lived and proceeded down the street. A tall, lean, masculine figure kept an almost even pace on the opposite side of the street, followed the feminine form into a drug store and occupied a telephone booth adjoining the one where the young girl had secreted herself.

"Mr. Coleman Algers, please," he heard voiced in sweet contralto after a number had been named. And then: "Coleman! At last! This is Louise. Some one broke into our apartment last night and the police found a picture of yours on the floor and are trying to find out your present address. I only want you to be careful—Coleman——"

The young girl stood brooding for a

The Two Detectives Followed Him Thru Many Byways.

moment after having replaced the receiver; then left the booth and the drug store.

"Found anything?" asked Carter as his friend rejoined him outside.

"Quite a nibble: Coleman Algers; not living at his father's address. What came of the accident statistics?"

"Nothing much, Sheffield. There have been two unidentified victims of which this Barcole must have been one."

"Young Algers, then, may be badly mixed up in this international sneak-thief game. His father is wealthy, but very often these young spendthrifts find themselves hard pressed. It is just possible that the dead Barcole's pal ingratulated himself with Miss Gem's frowned-upon lover in order to get the lay of the flat. Our clew, I believe, may start at his door and wind up at the door of the Mexican who has turned international burglar."

"Where does Algers live?"

"Let us see. Kenwood 291 was the number she called and my phone directory gives it as 4110 Combark avenue. Come. That is on the opposite side of the city."

### CHAPTER III.

THE air was still heavy when they reached the opposite side of the city; the mist made pastels out of every house. All the streets had a mirage appearance. The dim gold of the sunlight was reflected from neither brick facade nor casement, but seemed to drift on thru, as tho these were ethereal projections that would condense with the mist into drops, at dew-point.

The mirage included a lad in his early twenties standing as in indecision beside a house of fairylike architecture.

"Let's have another look at his photograph. I brought it away with me. H'm! No mistaking! He's the lad."

Suddenly, without seeming to begin to go, "the lad" was making down the street at a great pace. The two detectives followed him thru many by-ways. Then, after a westerly walk of three-quarters of an hour, he reached a little street of shambly brick houses that bordered a small and old cemetery. He slipped in at the gate of the corner house and rapped on the door. A middle-aged, aproned woman opened to him and, after some prolonged conversation, indistinguishable to the two who had followed, the woman motioned the lad into the house.

Sheffield and his colleague made a tour of the outside. It was a prison-like, one-story, atticless little house; every window had iron bars built into the masonry. Thru one of these windows they looked into a moderately furnished bedroom and saw that young Algers was seated in a rocker there, apparently in deep study.

Sheffield led the way to the front of the house again and knocked at the door. They heard a low, savage whine, a word of command, gently spoken, and the middle-aged woman again opened the door.

She was a short, asthmatic, work-a-day soul, with streaks of gray thru her thin hair, a placid countenance and quick, bewildered blue eyes. Crouching low near her, but with a hideous watchfulness permeating its attitude, lay the most fiendish-looking and monstrous bulldog the two men had ever seen. But it gave absolute obedience to the simple woman, whom Sheffield now started to question in low tones, first showing her his legal right to do so.

Upon his asking to see the gentleman she had just admitted, she indicated a door in the hall where she stood, immediately to her right. Sheffield entered the house door, but just as he raised his hand to rap upon the bedroom door his attention was seized by a long and ghastly handprint that showed itself brightly upon the shabby wall paper beside the doorway. His eyes glittered as he took from his wallet the square of rich wall covering he had taken from the Gem home.

"Identical!" he noted.

Then, with the keenest blade of his pocket-knife, while the woman stared dumbly, he cut an oblong on the dingy paper, wedged it loose from the wall and procured a replica of the first handprint.

He reached into his pocket, drew out a specially prepared sealed envelope, addressed fictitiously, in a wide, flowing hand to "Mr. C. Andrus."

"Hand this to the man in there and ask him if he is the party to whom it is addressed. Hold it by this corner, if you please, and give it to him, and when he hands it back, bring it by the same corner."

AS SHE hesitated, he again turned back the lapel of his coat, exposing the corner of a gleaming detective badge.

The woman took the envelope gingerly, eying Sheffield the while with animal wonder, and disappeared, only to bring the envelope back after a few moments.

"Did he take it into his hand?" whispered Sheffield.

"Yes, sir. It wasn't his'n and he give it right back. He don't room here. I never see him before. He just came askin' for the man that has that room and he said as long as he wasn't in, he would wait for him."

"Don't you know who he is at all?"

"No, sir. But he must be a friend of Mr. Simpson's."

"Mr. Simpson," Sheffield repeated, inquiringly.

"Yes, sir. He's my roomer. He's the only roomer I ever had. My daughter married in February, and one day this man come to the door and said he just come out of the county hospital and I let him have my daughter's old room till he got well—he looked so sick and bad—and I found I didn't mind him—he's quiet—and no one comin' 'round to see him and making noise—I told him he could have the room permanent. He gives me twelve dollars a week for it."

"Pretty good rental." Sheffield paused. "Did he have the bars put on the windows?"

"No. They were on when Mr. Kelly, my dead husband, bought the house, when Minnie was a baby."

"I see. Thank you, Mrs. Kelly; there has been a mistake and would you be kind enough not to mention our visit here? Would you just forget it altogether?"

He handed her a bit of green paper.

"I understand! Yes, sir! I see," she answered, with laughter twinkling in her eyes. "I know; my husband was a policeman."

### CHAPTER IV.

ONE of the most pulsing moments of a detective's life comes when a finger-print is about to reveal itself. Sheffield stood at a lamp with the envelope addressed to C. Andrus in his hand. Upon a shelf beside him were the two large squares of wall paper with the lank, ghastly, duplicate prints upon them. Sheffield tossed the envelope into a far wastebasket. Carter looked glum.

"That clears the youngster," he remarked. "I thought possibly he had painted his own hands yellow—but no. Now back again to the Mexican or Japanese hand theory."

He then did something that startled Carter into wide-mouthed staring: Sheffield removed another envelope, addressed similarly to the first. Carter gazed in complete astonishment as Sheffield walked across the floor and


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sprinkled some lycopodium powder on the envelope, shaking it carefully.

"Have you both your automatics in readiness? Because we have here—well, examine them first yourself, Carter. You're nearer the lamp," and he tossed the envelope.

"Whose fingerprints are these?" Carter inquired.

"Don't say you do not recognize them!" Sheffield made a bound toward him.

"It is not the 'wall-paper print,'"

Josman Sheffield craned his neck and peered at the envelope a pulsing second.

"I see it is not, indeed. When we were stalled in the taxicab at the graveyard corner a half-hour ago, on our way home from our friend Mrs. Kelly, and you were helping the chauffeur fix the engine, I saw a tall individual go to Mrs. Kelly's door. Having followed him, I overheard him say to her when she came to the door, that he would be back in the course of the afternoon and that he intended to sleep for the rest of the day when he returned. As he came down the street again, I handed him this envelope and asked him if he could direct me to the man whose name was upon it. He had no gloves on, and he took the envelope into his hand, and this is his print. And it is not the print we are seeking. Yet I have now a profound conviction that Simpson is Mr. Barcole, supposedly deceased. I could almost swear to it, tho I have never seen Mr. Barcole and may not have seen Simpson this morning. But one thing is certain: The man who visited the Gem home—tho he were a Japanese confederate, has visited Mrs. Kelly or her roomer also, as these bits of wall paper tell us.

"We have three moves to make. Our last will be to Mrs. Kelly's again, on Thorne and West Harrison streets. But on our way we shall stop off near the Loop and have the bureau of identification photograph and enlarge the index-finger and thumb of one of these wall-paper prints and have the loops, deltas and whorls numbered; then submit them to the clerk for identification. And after that, I have a little added data to look up—a matter of a half-hour or so."

And so the two men were soon speeding in a cab toward South Clark street and the bureau of indentification. The enlarging and numbering of the print was a matter of not many minutes and as they handed the finished work to the clerk to be looked up in the card index of crook finger-prints, the latter sighed wearily and started to forage amongst the systematized records.

It was not long, however, before his face lighted with interest.

"Why, these are the fingerprints of London Johnnie Corp," he declared. "Went down in the City of Ottumwa; body picked up the day after disaster; buried in a little cemetery on Thorne and West Harrison streets. Grave X206. Buried by his son, it says here."

"And you are quite positive that every whorl and delta; every loop corresponds?"

"Oh! Absolutely, Mr. Sheffield. Won't you step in here? You can see for yourself that it does."

CHAPTER V.

IN MRS. KELLY'S little sitting-room, two hours later, the problem took on an even deeper tone.

"I swear, Mr. Sheffield—and I'm a good Catholic," the poor woman said, after Sheffield had been questioning her for some minutes, "that no one but Black Douglas—my dog—Mr. Simpson and I have come in this house for months—this is September—for seven months, before this morning; not even last night, when I sat in the front door, it being so hot. Mr. Simpson has been away in Pittsburgh and came back about 3 o'clock this morning, as he said he would. But he was all alone, as always. And Black, here, would tear anybody into shreds who even tried the doors, back or front. The graveyard is right at the back here, you know."

"But you may have gone out shopping or marketing."

"Oh, I hardly ever go out, and when I do it is only across the street to the little store. And then I lock up good, and Black keeps house for me and I am always back in a few minutes. And I haven't been out for two or three days now, anyway. And Mr. Simpson has never had an outside door key, for I am always here to open for him."

"Could he have procured an impression from your key?"

"No, sir. He could never do that. I keep it tied around my neck under my dress. It's a Yale.' I sleep with it on."

"And yet these fingerprints on your wall. It's uncanny, Carter."

"And ain't they Mr. Simpson's?" Mrs. Kelly turned white as paper. Her jaws dropped and one could almost see her knees quake under the ample folds of her dress.

"No. Nor the young man's," Carter informed her.

"I knew that," she replied, "for I remarked them there before the young man came this morning. I intended to rub them off the paper." She suddenly sunk to a terrified whisper, and tiny pearls of perspiration began to form over her brow and face. "It—it must be a hant," came faintly from her.

"Mrs. Kelly, were the fingerprints there yesterday?"

"No."

"How can you be sure?"

"Why, I washed all the woodwork around the doors yesterday afternoon, and I swear the dirty fingermarks were not there then."

"You sat in your front doorway all night long and did not leave once?"

"I did not even go to sleep, Mr. Sheffield; not even so much as close my eye, it being so hot. Mrs. Casey and I chated once in a while. Most of the people on this street were in their doorways gasping for a little breeze."

"You may have dozed without knowing it?"

"Oh, but I didn't. Even if I had, nothing could escape Black Douglas, who was right beside me."

Sheffield looked at the creature. "No, I quite agree with you, Mrs. Kelly," he said.

"You see, the front door," she resumed, "is opposite the back door in this middle hall; so Black can watch both doors at once. I was sitting right in the doorway and that handmark isn't a yard from where I sat. And then look at those bars across the back door. And look at those iron bolts."

"One more question, Mrs. Kelly: Why do you keep this ferocious animal?"

"Well—I suppose I don't mind telling you, a detective, Mr. Sheffield. My husband did not leave me bad off and—this is between you and me—I'm not trusting to busting banks! There."

At this moment the front doorbell rang. Black Douglas whined savagely, but was quieted by a word from his mistress, who in another moment brought in Coleman Algers, excited; anxious; at the breaking point.

"Has this Mr. Simpson returned yet?" he almost demanded of Mrs. Kelly, ignoring the two strangers.

"What do you want of Mr. Simpson?" Sheffield asked, kindly.

"I want to know what his business was in a certain apartment I know of, at 2 o'clock this morning!"

"My dear Algers," replied Sheffield, "that is precisely what we want to know,

(Continued on Page 18.)

# The Albert Gate Enigma

(Continued From Page 4)

that four men have been killed as the result of a carefully-planned robbery. As for my brother——"

She paused and strove hard to force back her tears.

"Your brother has simply vanished, Miss Talbot. If the criminals did not scruple to leave four dead men behind, they would not draw the line at a fifth. The clear inference is that your brother is alive, but under restraint."

"I can see that it is possible he was alive until some time after the tragedy at Albert Gate. But—but—what connection can Jack have with the theft of diamonds worth millions? These people used him as their tool in some manner. Why should they spare him when success had crowned their efforts?"

"We are conversing in riddles. Will you explain?"

"You know that since the close of the big war my brother has been an assistant Under-Secretary in the Foreign Office?"

"Yes."

"Well, early in September, his chief placed him in charge of a special undertaking. The Sultan had decided to have a large number of rough diamonds cut and polished by the best European experts. They were all magnificent gems, exceedingly valuable it seems, being rare both in size and purity; but one of them was larger than any known diamond. Jack told me it was quite as big as a good-sized hen's egg. Both it and the others, he said, had the appearance of lumps of alum; but the experts said that the smaller stones were worth more than a million sterling, whilst the price of the large one could not be fixed. No one but an Emperor or Sultan would buy it. His Excellency Mehemet Ali Pasha was the especial envoy charged with this mission, and he brought credentials to the Foreign Office asking for facilities to be given for its execution. He and the two secretaries who accompanied him have been killed."

"Yes?" said Brett, whose eyes were fixed intently on the hearthrug.

"Jack was given the special duty looking after Mehemet Ali and his companions during their residence in London. It was his business to afford them every assistance in his power, to procure them police protection, obtain for them the best advice attainable in the diamond trade, and generally place at their disposal all the resources which the British government itself could command if it undertook such a curious task. He had been with them about a month—not hourly engaged, you understand, as once the preliminary arrangements were made, he had little further trouble—but he used to call there every morning and afternoon to see if he could render any assistance. Matters had progressed so favorably until the day before yesterday, that in another month he hoped to see the last of them. He was always saying that he would be glad when the business was ended, as he did not like to be officially connected with the fate of a few little bits of stone that happened to be so immensely valuable."

"DID your brother call there as usual on Monday afternoon?" said Brett.

"Yes; he came straight here from Albert Gate, and had tea with uncle and myself. He sat in the very chair and in the very position you now occupy. I can remember him saying: 'By Jove! the hen's egg'—that is what he used to call the big diamond—'is turning out in fine style.' He even discussed the possibility of bringing us to see the collection when it was finished and before it left this country."

"Did your brother say why the diamonds were brought to this country in the first instance?"

"Yes; the Sultan and his advisers seemed to think the work of cutting them could be performed more safely and expeditiously here than anywhere else. Even the Turk has a high regard for the manner in which law and order are maintained in Britain. Yet the sequel has shown that the diamonds and their guardians were perhaps in greater danger here than they would have been in Constantinople."

"Was that the only reason?" said Brett, who had apparently made up his mind with reference to the pattern of the carpet, and was now gazing into the bright fire which danced merrily in the grate, for the day tho fine was chilly.

The girl wrinkled her brows in thought before she answered: "I think I do remember Jack saying that he believed there was some state business mixed up in the affair, but I am quite sure he did not know the exact facts himself."

"Can you recollect any of the special precautions taken to protect the gems? Your brother may have mentioned some details in conversation, you know."

"Oh, I think I know all about them. In the first instance, the house at Albert Gate had previously been tenanted by a rich banker, and it was well defended by all ordinary means against the at-


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tacks of ordinary burglars. But, in addition to this, before the diamonds left the safe at the Bank of England, the building was practically torn to pieces inside by workmen acting under the direction of the commissioner of police. It was absolutely impossible for any one to enter except thru the front door, unless they flew out of the second story window. Servants and workmen, like everybody else, had to use this door alone, as the windows and doors in the basement had all been bricked up. Inside the entrance hall there were always twelve policemen, and an inspector in charge.

"Every one who left the house was searched by the inspector on duty, and Jack used to say that he was very glad he invariably insisted upon this examination, altho the police were at first disinclined to meet his wishes in the matter, he being, so to speak, their direct superior for the time. Beneath the entrance hall were rooms occupied by several Turkish and other servants. Mehemet Ali himself, in the presence of his secretaries, used to open the door leading to the suite of apartments in which the diamond cutters worked, and two of the Turkish gentlemen would remain there all day until the men left in the evening. The envoy and both secretaries used to meet Jack when he visited the place, and for the last three weeks he had nothing to do but see the diamonds, count them, drink an excellent cup of coffee, and smoke a wonderful cigarette, made of some special Turkish tobaco, cultivated and prepared only for the Imperial household."

"Ah!" sighed Brett, with a note of almost unconscious envy in his voice. He knew exactly what that coffee and those cigarettes would be like. "I beg your pardon," he went on, perceiving that Miss Talbot did not understand his exclamation. "Will you tell me as nearly as you can the occurrences of Monday evening?"

"They were simple enough," said the girl. "My brother dined at home. We had one or two guests, and were all in the drawing-room about 10:15, when a note came for him from Mehemet Ali. I know exactly what was in it. I looked over his shoulder while he read it. The words were: 'I wish to see you tonight on important business. Come, if possible, at once.' I have to tell you that it was in French, but this is an exact translation."

"Your brother was quite sure that it was from Mehemet Ali himself?" said Brett.

"Quite sure," was the reply. "He knew his handwriting well, having had several communications from him during the progress of the business."

"Did your brother leave the house immediately?" asked Brett.

"That instant. He went downstairs, put on his overcoat and hat, and got into a cab with the messenger who brought the note."

"Do you know who this messenger was?"

"One of the policemen on duty in the house itself."

A SLIGHT pause ensued, and Brett was about to take his departure, having no further questions to ask at the moment, when some one was heard hastily ascending the stairs, talking to a companion as he advanced.

"This is my uncle," exclaimed Miss Talbot, rising to go to the door. Before she could reach it an elderly gentleman entered, bearing upon him all those distinguished tokens that stamp a man as a retired major-general.

He exclaimed impetuously:

"I have brought a gentleman from Scotland Yard, my dear." Then he caught sight of Britt. "Who is this?"

Edith was about to explain, when another man entered—a strongly-built, bullet-headed man, with keen eyes and firm mouth, and a curious suggestion in his appearance of having combined pugilism with process-serving as a professional means of existence. His face extended into a smile when his eyes fell upon the barrister.

"Ah, Mr. Brett," he cried. "Now we have something to do that is up to your mark. You are on the spot first, as usual, but this time I can honestly say that I am glad to see you."

Sir Hubert Fitzjames glanced in astonishment from his niece to the barhister. He could find nothing better to say than:

"This, my dear, is Mr. Winter of Scotland Yard."

## CHAPTER III.

### WHAT THE POLICE SAW.

BRETT promptly cleared the situation by explaining to Sir Hubert, in a few words, the reason for his unexpected presence, and when the major-general learned the name of the distinguished personage who had sent Lord Fairholme to the barrister he expressed a ready acquiescence in the desire to utilize his services. Nor was the effect of such a notable introduction lost on Mr. Winter, whose earlier knowledge of the barrister's remarkable achievements in unraveling the tangled skein of criminal investigation was now supplemented by a certain amount of awe for a man who commanded the confidence of His Majesty's government.

"Well," said Sir Hubert Fitzjames, with the brisk animation of one accustomed to utter commands that must be instantly obeyed, "we shall now proceed to business."

For the moment no one spoke. The Scotland Yard detective evidently wished his distinguished colleague to take the lead. No sooner did Brett perceive this than he rose, bowed politely to Miss Talbot and her uncle, and said:

"The first thing to do is to trace the whereabouts of Mr. Talbort, and this should be a comparatively easy task. The other features of ths strange occurrence impress me as highly complex, but it is far too early a stage in the investigation to permit any definite opinion expressed at this moment."

Every one seemed to be surprised by Brett's attitude.

"Where are you going, sir?" asked Mr. Winter.

"That depends largely upon you," was the smiling reply. "If you come with me we will go directly to Albert Gate, but if you decide to prosecute further inquiries here, I shall await your arrival at my flat."

"That is as much as saying that there are no facts worth inquiring into to be learned here?"

"Exactly so. Miss Talbot has told me all that is material to our purpose. Her brother was unexpectedly sent for after dinner on Monday night, and left the house hurriedly, without affording any clew to his subsequent proceedings beyond that contained in a brief note sent to him by Mehemet Ali Pasha. Indeed, it was impossible for him to afford any explanation, as he himself was quite unprepared for the summons. Meanwhile, every moment lost in the endeavor to follow up his movements is precious time wasted."

The barrister's manner, no less than his words, impressed Mr. Winter so greatly that he rose from tne seat which he had occupied, with the intention of conducting a long and careful examination of each member of the household.

"Then I shall come with you at once," he said.

"Oh," cried the major-general, "I understood you to say as we came here that there were many questions which required immediate inquiry in this house, on the principle that the movements of the missing man should be minutely traced from the very commencement."

Mr. Winter looked somewhat confused, but Edith Talbot broke in—

"I think, uncle dear, it would be well to defer to Mr. Brett's judgment."

"Do you really believe," she said, turning to the barrister, "that you will soon be able to find my brother?"

"I am quite sure of it," he replied, and the conviction in his tones astonished the professional detective, whilst it carried a message of hope to the others. Even Sir Hubert, for some reason which he could not explain, suddenly experienced a strong sense of confidence in this reserved, distinguished-looking man. He stepped forward eagerly and held out his hand, saying:

"Then we shall not detain you, Mr. Brett. Act as you think fit in all things, but do let us have all possible information at the earliest moment. The suspense and uncertainty of the present position of affairs are terribly trying to my niece and myself." The old soldier spoke with dignity and composure, but his lips quivered, and the anguish in his eyes was pitiful.

Brett and Mr. Winter quitted the house; they hailed a hansom, and drove rapidly towards Albert Gate.

"Do you know," said the man from Scotland Yard, breaking in on his companion's reverie, "you surprised me by what you said just now, Mr. Brett?"

"I thought you were too old a hand to be surprised at anything," was the reply.

"Oh, come now, you know well enough what I mean. You said you thought it would be a comparatively simple matter to find Mr. Talbot, while the other features of the crime are very complex. Now the affair, thus far, impresses me as being the exact opposite to that statement. The crime is simple enough. A clever gang of thieves get into the place by working some particularly cool and daring confidence game. They don't hesitate at murder to cover up their tracks, and they make away with the plunder under the very noses of the police. All this may be smart and up to date in its methods, but it is not unusual. The difficult question to my mind is, what have they done with Mr. Talbot, and how did they succeed in fooling him so completely as to make him what one might almost call a party to the transaction?"

The barrister pulled out a cigar-case.

"TRY one of these, Winter," he said.

"You will find them soothing."

"I never smoke while on business," was the testy reply.

"I invariably do." He proceeded to light a cigar, which he smoked with zest.

"I do not know how it is," went on Mr. Winter, "but whenever I happen to meet you, Mr. Brett, in the course of an inquiry, I always start by being very angry with you."

"Why?" There was an amused twinkle in Brett's eyes, which might have warned the other of a possible pitfall.

"Because you treat me as if I were a precocious youth. You listen to my theories with a sort of pitying indulgence, yet I have the reputation of being one of the best men in Scotland Yard, or I should not have been put on this job. And I am older than you, too."

"I may surely pity you," said Brett, "even if I don't indulge you too much."

"There you go again," snapped the detective. "Now, what is there silly about my theory of the crime, I should like to know?"

"You shall know, and before you are much older. Bear with me for a little while, I beg of you. You may be right, and I may be quite wrong, but I think there is much beneath the surface in the investigations we are now pursuing. My advice to you is to drop all preconceived theories, to note every circumstance, however remote it may appear in its bearing upon events, and in any case not to act precipitately. Whatever you do, don't arrest anybody."

"But," said the other, somewhat mollified by Brett's earnestness, "half a dozen people may be arrested at any moment."

"Pray tell me how?"

"Descriptions of the stolen diamonds and of the suspected persons are in every police office in Great Britain and in most Continental centers by this time. Passengers by all steamers are most carefully scrutinized. Every pawnbroker and diamond merchant in the country is on the look-out, and, generally speaking, it will be odd if somebody does not drop into the net before many hours have passed."

"It will, indeed," murmured Brett; "and no doubt the somebody in question will experience a certain amount of inconvenience before he proves to you that he had nothing whatever to do with the matter. Now, don't answer me, Winter, but ponder serious over this question: Do you really think that the intelligence which planned and successfully carried thru an operation of such magnitude will be trapped by plain-clothes constables watching the gangways of steamships, or by any pawnbroker who has ever lent half the value of a pledge?"

Almost impatiently the barrister waived the subject out of the hansom, and the detective had sense enough to leave him alone during the few remaining minutes before the vehicle pulled up near the Albert Gate mansion.

Brett stopped the driver some little distance short of the house itself, as he did not wish to attract the attention of a knot of curious sightseers in the street. He asked Winter to precede him and make known the fact that he was coming, so that there would be no delay at the door. This the detective readily agreed to do, and Brett rapidly took in the main external features of the house which had become the scene of such a remarkable tragedy.

It was a palatial structure, built on the somber lines of the early Victorian period. Miss Talbot's brief description of the measures taken to protect its occupants from interference was fully borne out by its aspect. There was no access to the basement; the main entrance was situated at the side; all the ground-floor and first-story windows facing into the street were fitted with immovable wooden venetians. Presumably those on the park side were similarly secured, whilst the back wall abutted on to that of another mansion, equally large and strongly built, tenanted by a well-known peer.

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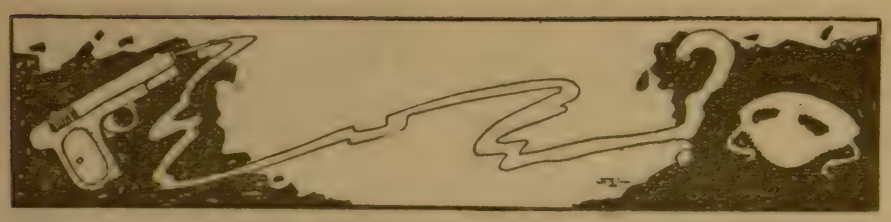

# The Million Dollar Suitcase

(Continued From Page 6)

money there might be some clew to the origin; but only more bills, in packages, in rolls and in loose disorder, rewarded him.

Then he turned his attention to the bag itself. It was of shabby pigskin, of the shape known as a "kit-bag," and if it were not his own, it was certainly his own's twin brother. On one end of his, tho, had been his initials—"J. L. B." —and on neither end of this was there any letters whatever. That, then, was the explanation. He had taken this bag in mistake when he left the Pullman. But it was not his fault; for the porter had carried the bags out and had placed it in his hands as he alighted.

It struck him at once that had his own bag contained so much money he would have guarded it more carefully. He could not conceive of a man carrying about this fortune and trusting it for in instant out of his personal custody. Such carelessness deserved punishment, and he doubted not the owner was being very sorely punished at just this moment, by which time he had probably discovered his loss.

Brooke smiled as he pictured to himself the mental distress of the loss.

"Serves him right!" he ejaculated. "He'll know better next time. It's lucky for him it fell into honest hands. Now I'll have a more careful look thru the filthy lucre, and see if I can find some trace of the careless Midas who goes about so deliciously well heeled."

DELIBERATELY and with systematic care he began removing the money from the bag and laying it out on the table, estimating the amount of each handful as he did so, and religiously searching all the while for some scrap of writing or printing to indicate the name and address of the loser.

And as he proceeded with this work the wonder of his find grew more and more impressive, for before the bag was half empty he had roughly counted up to over half a million dollars, and the denominations of the bills seemed to be increasing rather than lessening. And thus far not the sign of a name or anything indicative of ownership in any form had he found.

He worked more slowly now—counting more accurately and hunting still more searchingly—and all the while endeavoring to imagine the character of the man likely to have such an amount of money in his possession, transported in such a fashion, and with so little heed to its safe-keeping.

Bank messengers, brokers' clerks, merchants, importers, bookmakers, bribing politicians—all these were considered in turn and put aside for one good reason or another; the final result of his consideration being that the money was either the property of some eccentric millionaire or the plunder of some criminal who had purposely avoided all marks of identification on either of the exterior or the interior of the article of conveyance.

And for choice between these two, he was rather inclined to favor the latter conclusion, believing that in spite of all he had heard of American plutocrats, they were outnumbered—the eccentric ones, at all events—by the lower class of criminals.

"If," he communed with himself, "this money is the ill-gotten proceeds of some law-evading project, it's a very grave question whether the law evader will dare to put in a claim for it; tho it is not improbable that the robbed or swindled parties will sooner or later be forthcoming."

And just at that particular moment, as Brooke stood with two thousand or more dollars in his hand, seventy-odd thousand spread over the table under the electric light, and the bag still unemptied, there came a resounding knock on his door.

Instantly the possibilities of what might ensue from his being discovered in his present occupation rushed in upon him. All the guesses he had just been making concerning the unknown loser of the bag and its contents would naturally be made by his discoverer regarding him; with the probable result of the same conclusion being reached, and the suspicion born that he was the unrighteous possessor of ill-gotten wealth. Nor would he be able, in such an event, to explain the situation. How many men, he asked himself, would believe his story that he had been given the bag in mistake by a Pullman porter?

NO, HIS visitor, whoever he might be, must not see the money. To throw it back in the bag would involve recounting the whole, and already he had spent more than an hour in making his estimate.

For just a moment the thought assailed him that possibly the owner of the bag had watched him when he took it from the porter, and, for reasons best known to himself, had preferred that he, Brooke, should carry that precious burden from the station to a hotel, while the owner had now come to claim it, bringing Brooke's bag in exchange.

Again came the rap on the door; louder still now and more insistent, and Brooke, stepping hastily to the bathroom, intent upon securing a bath towel to throw over the money-strewn table, started back in dismay.

He had forgotten, in the excitement of his discovery, the faucets turned for his bath, and the little room was flooded from the overflowing tub. The floor was a miniature lake fed by the Niagara which poured over the tub's sides.

Hastily he turned off the flood, splashing to do so thru the pool which spread vamp-high over the tiled flooring. Then, snatching a towel from a hook, he returned to his chamber, spread it across the table and the bank notes, closed the bag as best he could, and turned at last to the door, upon which the knocking was now repeated.

"All right! All right!" he called, a little excitedly. "What's the trouble?" And with that he opened, to face a porter, who, mumbling something he could not understand, pushed by him and disappeared into the bathroom he had just quitted.

Brooke closed the door into the passage and followed him.

"Do ye bees wantin' to drown the leddy in the room below?" asked the man. "Sure, the ceilin' over her bed is pourin' like a shower bat'."

"I'm very sorry, indeed," Brooke began, while the porter pulled the plug out of the tub and then threw every towel in the room upon the floor in an effort to absorb the pool.

For ten minutes or more the man worked energetically with the sopping towels, while Brooke stood in the doorway, vainly endeavoring to express his regrets.

"Ye wint to slape, I suppose, while ye wuz waitin'," the porter went on. "I've knowed it to happen—the likes o' that. But it's hard on the hotel, ye know. The leddy may be after gettin' the pneumoneay, and suein' us for the damages, over and above the cost of a new ceilin' and wall paper."

"Oh, I hope not," said Brooke seriously. "I'm sure I wouldn't want the hotel to lose anything on account of my carelessness, and yet—damages for pneumonia and a new ceiling and wall paper are, I am afraid, rather beyond my modest means."

The porter rose from his task, and as Brooke backed into the bedroom the Irishman took his place in the doorway.

"Sure, it's shtill a bit damp in there," he said. "Now if I had a dirthy towel, I——"

As he spoke his eye fell upon the towel on the table, which was at his right hand.

In an eye-wink he had snatched it off, dragging in its train a scattering score of bills.

"Holy murther!" he exclaimed in dismay. "What be I afther doin'? Excuse me, sir. I'd no knowledge ye wuz a banker."

FOR a moment Brooke stood quite still, startled by the sudden turn of things. Then he stooped and gathered up the money from the floor.

"It's all right," he protested, putting the best face possible upon the matter. "Never mind. You can use the towel if you want to. I didn't know who was


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coming in, and I thought it best not to have so much cash on view."

But his visitor still stood gazing at the array of funds upon the table, stunned, now that his first outburst of surprise was over, at the piles of greenbacks and yellowbacks—more money than he had ever seen in all his life before.

As Brooke regained the upright, the recovered bills between his fingers, the man spoke again.

"Sure it's a fortune!" he exclaimed, his eyes wide. "Be yez a bookmaker, or what, I dunno?"

Brooke realized the necessity for some sort of an explanation. The demand was upon him with such suddenness that he was not prepared, and he paused for just a heartbeat to spur his wits.

"I'm a stakeholder," he said suddenly. "It's all on a bet."

The Irishman's mouth opened in astonishment.

"Ah-h-h!" he murmured. "An' is it so! An' does one gintleman stan' to win all of ut?"

"Every blooming penny," answered Brooke, speaking the truth.

The porter changed his position to get a better view of the piled wealth.

"Excuse me, sir," he apologized, "but wud yez moind tellin' me if ut's an iliction bit or a bit on a prize fight?"

"It's neither"—Brooke's inventive powers were now suddenly keenly active—"it's not half so sensible. It's a very silly wager, considering the enormous amount that is involved."

"Is ut, sir?"

"It concerns the daughter of the president of the candy trust."

The porter drew the length of the towel between his hands and looked expectant.

"One gentleman bets," Brooke went on, with studied seriousness, "that the young lady's eyes are blue, and the other gentleman bets they are brown. I hold the stakes and I am to decide." He had been a reader of romance to some profit.

A grin broadened the Irishman's mouth.

"An' if they bees gray?" he asked.

"The bet's a draw and the whole amount goes to charity," added Brooke.

It was then that the porter turned away, shaking his astonished head, and went silently back to finish his work with the dry towel, while the fabulist smiled at himself in the mirror and rearranged the disturbed mounds of bank notes.

"I'll be afther goin' now," said his visitor a moment later, coming out of the bathroom, "an' I'd advise yez to be careful of thim shtakes. It suttenly do be a pity as gintlemin has nothin' better to do wid their money than to bit it on the color of a gal's eyes. Good night, sir!"

When he had gone Brooke drew a chair up to the table and sat down. He admitted to himself that his invention had been a foolish, simple thing; yet he believed it had served his purpose, which after all was only to convince the Irish porter that the money was not his property. He would finish his search and estimate now, and then draw a fresh bath and get to bed. His shaving would have to be postponed until he could find a barber.

As he continued extracting bills from the bag, running them roughly over, he planned as to the care of this fortune which had so strangely come into his hands. In the morning he would secure a piece of cord, tie the broken lips of the satchel together and carry it to a safe deposit vault, where it should rest until he could get some clew to its ownership. That, of course, provided there was no advertisement in the newspapers concerning it, which very possibly there would be.

HE HAD just fingered over the last roll and was totaling up his penciled notes when once again he heard a tapping on his door. He had no towel now to throw over the displayed wealth, and to cram it all back into the bag before he opened the door would only be to invite repeated and louder knocking.

So he hurriedly made a screen, this time of his coat, which had been lying on the bed behind him, and then, with renewed misgiving, turned the key and guardedly unclosed the door a few inches.

"It's only me, sir." He recognized the voice of the porter again, tho the fellow spoke in a whisper, not to disturb sleeping guests who had their transoms open. "I've brought ye some clane towels, sir, and"—he hesitated and put his head half inside the narrow opening—"it's me as has a piece of news fur ye. They do be tellin' me that the leddy you kim nigh to drowndin' in the room below, sir, is her, sir. Yes, sir, the wery one, sir."

Brooke opened the door a little wider and stared perplexedly.

"Is her?" he repeated. "The very one! What the devil do you mean. I haven't the——"

"Her! Yes, sir! The leddy you was afther shpaking of, sir. Miss Colby, sir. The leddy wid de eyes, sir. The darter of him as is called the Candy King, sir."

Brooke with difficulty restrained a smile. Colby, eh? He had not known even the name of the Candy Trust president, much less that he was really a father.

"Oh, you don't tell me!" he said, with amused interest. "That's a strange coincidence, isn't it? I'll have a look at her tomorrow to decide that bet."

He found a half dollar in his pocket and gave it to the inquiring servitor.

"The night chambermaid is afther tellin' me her eyes do be black, sir," the man added, as he took the coin. "Thank ye, sir, and good night to ye."

Could it be possible, Brooke asked himself, that this idle invention of his was to involve him in complications? It was evident that already the money and the story of the bet had become gossip among the hotel servants. Before morning how much farther might it go?

Carefully he lifted his coat from the money-piled table and took up his memorandum; $275,000, $147,000, $810,000, $166,000, $170,000, $226,000, $117,000. That was a fair count in round numbers—it would not vary, all in all, a thousand dollars either way—and the total was $1,182,000.

"Suppose," murmured Brooke, his eyes dancing at the possibility, "only just suppose it should never be claimed!"

## CHAPTER III.

### JOURNALISM.

LONG before 8 o'clock, the hour at which he desired to be aroused, John Brooke was astir. His night had been restless, filled with sudden awakenings and punctuated by the ever recurrent thought of the bag of money, which he had placed under the bed clothes between himself and the wall. At dawn, as soon as there was sufficient light to see clearly, he had it out, the contents once more removed, and the bag undergoing a thoro, minute inspection.

It had occurred to him that the name of the maker might be stamped somewhere upon it and, that if this were so, it would afford a possible clew to the owner. But the maker's name was not to be found. Nor did he find a single mark save a barely decipherable "patented 1881" on one of the brass catches, which only told him that the hardware was of American manufacture, and that was scarcely to be regarded as significant.

Later, having put his find carefully out of sight, he rang for a page and ordered the morning papers—all of them, for he was inexperienced, and had no idea which would be the most likely medium for the advertisement he half expected.

When they came he threw himself down on the bed again and began a systematic search. One after another he examined with careful deliberation, the sole result being a fixed conviction that New York women were amazingly careless as to their jewels and that New York fox terriers were a pack of ungrateful renegades.

Having thus exhausted the "Lost and Found" columns, he turned to the news, running casually over the headlines in search of something interesting and glancing incidentally at the portraits and other illustrations. But scarcely had he scanned a page before he sprang to a sitting posture, clutching the page eagerly with both hands, his head bent forward, his eyes devouring, his brain intent.

The headlines which provoked this sudden physical uprising and excited this absorbing mental interest were these:

KILLED IN FALL FROM TRAIN.
Body Supposed to Be That of John Brooke of Honolulu Found Beside Tracks in Mott Haven Yard.

And with electric swiftness he raced thru the account which followed:

Close beside the railroad tracks in the Mott Haven yards last night, a section hand found the dead body of a young man who had evidently fallen or jumped from one of the incoming trains. The man's skull was crushed and death was probably instantaneous. There were no papers on the body to serve as identification.

The Empire State Express having passed this point only five minutes before the section hand's discovery, it was thought that the unfortunate man might have been a passenger on that train.

It was learned later that a traveling bag belonging to John L. Brooke had been unclaimed when the express reached the Grand Central station, and the colored porter of the Pullman car on which Brooke was a passenger declared that he had not seen him leave the car.

The porter also stated that when he went to the vestibule platform on approaching the terminal he found that one of the side doors had been opened. It is supposed that Brooke went out to the platform for air, opened this door, and, failing to hold fast as the train swung around a curve at Mott Haven, was thrown off.

Brooke came from Honolulu, and was on his way to visit his uncle, a Boston stock broker named Perry.

He was one of the few passengers on the Overland Express, which was wrecked at Sledville, Ind., two nights ago, who escaped injury.

The body was removed to the morgue.

Having read the article once in frantic haste, Brooke read it now again more slowly, his brain swept meanwhile by a flood of retrospection and an avalanche of possibilities. In his excitement over finding the money he had paid small heed to his own missing bag with its inexpensive and unimportant contents.

His trunk he had checked straight thru to his uncle in Boston; but the fact that he was without a change of clothing had failed to make any particular im-


# SUGAR 5c LB.

Don't miss this great opportunity to get sugar at 5c a pound, and don't forget that you can get just as big bargains if you buy all your groceries from us. First Quality Goods at Lowest Prices. Instead of offering you premiums with your goods, we put the cost of the premiums into the quality. Remember That You Pay For the Premiums. Our goods represent Full Value. You get your Money's Worth. With your first order you get FREE, our big bargain catalog—the greatest money saving book that will ever come into your home. Here are some sample bargains sold with Grocery Orders.

## FLOUR $8.36 Per Barrel

(One of our Leaders)

Our Best Flour.....$8.36 per barrel
Our Best Flour..... 4.18 per half barrel
Our Best Flour..... 2.09 per 49-lb. sack

Begin NOW to cut the High Cost of Living, fill out and mail the Trial Order Coupon Today, and the goods and Big Bargain Catalog will be mailed to you at once.

## SUGAR $5.00 Per 100 lbs.

(One of our Leaders)

Our Best Granulated Sugar.....$5.00 per 100 lbs.
Our Best Granulated Sugar..... 2.50 per 50 lbs.
Our Best Granulated Sugar..... 1.25 per 25 lbs.
Our Best Granulated Sugar..... .50 per 10 lbs.

## TRIAL ORDER

| | (Estimated) Retail Price | Our Price |
|---|---|---|
| 2 lbs. Best Granulated Sugar | 50c | 10c |
| 1 Tube Concentrated Vanilla Extract | 50c | 29c |
| 1 Pound Our Very Best Baking Powder | 50c | 39c |
| 1 Large Box Extra Fine Face Powder | 75c | 44c |
| 1 Tube Dental Paste | 50c | 39c |
| 1 Box Sardines | 25c | 19c |
| 3 Bars DYFOAM Soap | 20c | 19c |
| One Catalog Free | Retail Price $3.30 | Our Price $1.99 |

You Save $1.31

**OUR GUARANTEE** Simply fill out the Trial Order Coupon and send it with $1.99. Goods will be shipped direct to you and remember that you don't risk a penny, for our guarantee says: "Money Back if Goods Are Not Exactly as Represented. The object of the Trial Order is to get all your orders for groceries in future. Fill it out and send it before our offer is withdrawn.

**GOLD MEDAL GROCERY CO.**
Dept. B 16, 1424 Lytton Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

## Other Big Bargains in Our Catalog

Uneeda Biscuits, 12 packages.....40 cents
Quaker Oats, 6 large packages.....36 cents
AND OTHER BIG BARGAINS.

**REMEMBER** we send no catalog unless we receive your trial order.

DON'T DELAY. Rush your trial order at once and get our Bargain Grocery Catalog and begin to cut down the High Cost of Living at once.

No article sold separately. Orders are sold complete only.

## Trial Order Coupon No. 12

GOLD MEDAL GROCERY CO.
Dept. B 16, 1424 Lytton Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

Gentlemen: Enclosed please find $1.99 for which send me Bargain Grocery Order No. B 16 and include free your catalog showing your big Grocery Bargains, it being understood and agreed if I am not perfectly satisfied that I can return the goods and you will at once return my money.

Name.....
Address.....
City..... State.....
Express Office.....



# BRAND NEW FORD TOURING CAR GIVEN

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 9 | 23 | 1 | 14 | 20 |
| 1 | 6 | 15 | 18 | 4 |

SOLVE THIS PUZZLE. WIN FINE PRIZE

The figures in the squares represent corresponding letters in the alphabet. Figure 1 is A, 2 is B, 3 is C, and so on. The ten figures spell four words. Send the four words on a slip of paper with your name and address quick if you want to win. I have given away many Autos and scores of other prizes. My plan is so simple it is easy to win prizes and cash rewards.

## Thousands of Dollars in Other Grand Prizes and Cash Rewards

Besides the New Ford Car I am going to give away Superb Cabinet Phonograph, Bicycles, Gold Watches, Kodaks, Traveling Bag, Chest of Silverware, Dinner Set and Cash Rewards. No experience is required. You don't put up a penny or do any hard work. Just an opportunity to realize your ambition to have an Automobile all your own and a chance to get it in the easiest way imaginable. Don't let anyone in your neighborhood beat you to it. The quicker you act, the bigger your winnings. Send me your answer to the puzzle with your name and address, without delay. DUANE W. GAYLORD, 537 S. Dearborn St., Dept. 15, CHICAGO, ILL.



# WANTED—30,000 BOYS

WE HAVE 30,000 boys who sell our great papers—The Saturday Blade, Chicago Ledger and Lone Scout. Thousands of them earn from $1.00 to $5.00 a week. People in every town and R. F. D. know our great papers and we have received thousands of letters from people asking the name of the local agent so they could buy the papers from them. We want 30,000 more agents, so that there will be an agent in every town and R. F. D. route, and to get them we have a wonderful new plan which gives our agents cash profits on every paper they sell and

## NO EXPERIENCE NEEDED—VALUABLE PREMIUMS FREE!

No experience is necessary, the less experience you have the better. We show you when you start just where to get the customers, how to sell the papers and just what to do. No town or R. F. D. route is too small to sell our papers in. Thousands of our agents in the smallest towns and R. F. D. routes are making the biggest money every week and are getting the valuable premiums. Remember, you can't lose anything. We send the papers all in one bundle so that they come to you all at one time, on Friday. You have a paper to sell to every man, woman and Boy. We show you just how to build up a route of regular customers that means steady profits every week.

**We pay your expense of joining Lone Scouts of America if you qualify.** When you send us your first report, and if you want to join L. S. A., we pay the cost of sending you Membership Badge, Handbook and Membership Card.

*IT IS EASY TO GET STARTED TODAY*

but you must hurry, for the agencies are being grabbed up quickly by boys. It takes no money to start. Just fill out the blank below and we will send you a complete agent's outfit absolutely free and your first week's supply of papers.

W. D BOYCE CO., DEPT. 3, 512 N. DEARBORN ST., CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Name .....
Street or R. F. D. No. .....
Town ..... State .....

I accept the agency for your 3 papers. Send me as many copies of each as you think I can sell the first week. If I qualify, it is understood you pay my expense of joining the Lone Scouts of America if I want to join. Also tell me how to get the valuable premiums.



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Blanche Arral, Noted Opera Singer, Takes Off 34 lbs. by Drinking Tea Prepared from Javanese Herbs

NO DRUGS—NOT INJURIOUS TO HEALTH—NO DIET—NO EXERCISE

Boiled and used same as ordinary Tea.

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Genuine Russet Army Shoes, direct from the GOVERNMENT WAREHOUSES, slightly worn, which we are neatly repairing and repolishing. Uppers guaranteed two years. THE IDEAL WORK SHOE. Easily worth $12.00 wearing value. Our price $2.90. Mail $1.00, balance on delivery; satisfaction guaranteed.

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We have a new method that controls Asthma, and we want you to try it at our expense. No matter whether your case is of long standing or recent development, whether it is present as Hay Fever or chronic Asthma, you should send for a free trial of our method. No matter in what climate you live, no matter what your age or occupation, if you are troubled with asthma, our method should relieve you promptly.

We especially want to send it to those apparently hopeless cases, where all forms of inhalers, douches, opium preparations, fumes, "patent smokes," etc., have failed. We want to show everyone at our expense, that this new method is designed to end all difficult breathing, all wheezing, and all those terrible paroxysms at once.

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# Cured His Piles

**Now 88 Years Old But Works At Trade of Blacksmith and Feels Younger Since Piles Are Gone.**

The oldest active blacksmith in Michigan is still pounding his anvil in the town of Homer—thanks to my internal method of treating piles.

Mr. Jacob Lyon, Homer, Mich.

I wish that you could hear him tell of his many experiences with ointments, salves, dilators, etc., before he tried my method. Here is a letter just received from him:

Mr. E. R. Page, Marshall, Mich.

Dear Sir: I want you to know what your treatment has done for me. I had suffered with piles for many years and used suppositories and all kinds of treatments, but never got relief until I tried yours. Am now completely cured. Although I am 88 years old, and the oldest active blacksmith in Michigan, I feel years younger since the piles have left me. I will surely recommend it to all I know who suffer this way. You can use my letter any way you wish and I hope it will lead others to try this wonderful remedy.

Yours truly,
J. L. LYON.

There are thousands of afflicted people suffering with piles who have never yet tried the one sensible way of treating them.

Don't be cut. Don't waste money on foolish salves, ointments, dilators, etc., but send today for a Free Trial of my internal method for the healing of Piles.

No matter whether your case is of long standing or recent development—whether it is occasional or permanent—you should send for this free trial treatment.

No matter where you live—no matter what your age or occupation—if you are troubled with piles, my method will relieve you promptly.

This liberal offer of free treatment is too important for you to neglect a single day. Write now. Send no money. Simply mail the coupon—but do this now—TODAY.

FREE PILE REMEDY

E. R. Page,
332H Page Bldg., Marshall, Mich.
Please send free trial of your Method to:

.....

.....

.....


pression, absorbed as he was in the chance finding of a fortune, the reward for the return of which, he fancied, would be more than enough to compensate him for his loss and inconvenience.

And now it seemed that the only logical conclusion was that the man who lay dead at the morgue was the rightful possessor of the bag and the money which had fallen so strangely into Brooke's hands. And, there being no letters or other papers on the body, there was nothing to indicate the man's identity. It was natural, perhaps, under the circumstances, Brooke thought, his own bag having been unclaimed, to fancy that he was the victim.

He wondered whether his uncle would come on to identify the body. He supposed he would, and yet he would be at a disadvantage. Alexander Perry had not seen his nephew since he was 4 years old, and Brooke doubted that he had ever been the recipient of a photograph in all the intervening time. Certainly he had had no photograph recently. How then was he to know?

Would not the man's clothes, or his hat at least, have some identifying label to prove that he was not from Honolulu? All the chances were that they would. And yet all the chances were that in his pockets would have been found some card or memorandum to prove, if not his name, at least that he was not a stranger from the far Pacific isle.

Brooke ran over in his mind the men who had been his fellow passengers from Buffalo, in an effort to identify this unfortunate, so shockingly taken from a life which must have been worth living, seeing that he possessed such an ample fortune in ready money. But he had failed to observe with any degree of interest the men on the train.

He had been so deeply absorbed in reviewing the incidents of the wreck of the night before, and especially the scene in the little farmhouse, and in reproaching himself for failing to learn the name of the woman he had succored, that his fellow passengers were little more to him than shadows, leaving no impression whatsover upon his memory.

But the question for him to decide now was whether or not to reveal himself. Should he go to the morgue and declare that the body brought there was not his body? Should he wire his uncle that he was still alive and that the announcement of his death, as Mark Twain once graphically and humorously put it, was premature?

Should he turn the bag of money over to the authorities and claim his own bag in return? The situation offered a problem that required a deal of thinking for its proper solution.

IT MUST be remembered, however, that Brooke was not only young but romantic. Had he been older and more prosaic his reasoning might have taken a different trend. As it was, it ran along the lines of pure adventure as he had learned it from story books. There was no flaw in his honesty. Not for one moment did he consider the possibility of making this million odd dollars his own. It was not his. That was conceded from the first. But he felt that he had no right to deliver it until he could find the rightful owner. If he turned it over to the coroner or to the police there was no telling what disposition might be made of it. He had read something of the easy consciences of municipal officers in the great cities of the United States and he was disinclined to take any risks.

For the present, at least, he decided, it would be well to do nothing. He would, to use the vernacular, "lie low" or "sit tight," awaiting developments. It was quite possible that the body at the morgue would be identified by friends of the dead man, who would know of what he was bringing to New York, and raise a hue and cry for its production. Then Brooke would step forward and deliver it.

That this waiting might involve him in difficulty did not suggest itself, or if it did he put it aside too confident in his integrity of purpose to give it weight.

Now, the first thing to be done was to get the money to a place of safety. The safe-deposit vault idea of the night before recurred to him, and he resolved to make inquiries as to the nearest responsible place of this kind. In the meantime, however, he must have his breakfast, and since he could hardly carry the bag of money with him into the restaurant, and he was disinclined to leave it unguarded, he rang for a waiter, and ordered the meal served in his room.

It was not quite 8 o'clock when he sat down to bacon and eggs and coffee, still so busy with his thoughts and all the involved chain of possibilities that he scarcely knew what he was eating. But even thus early he was doomed to disturbance. His telephone whirred loudly, startling him from his reverie.

"A reporter to see you, Mr. Brooke."

That was the message he heard, and at the sound of the words he winced. In his rumination he had altogether forgotten that on the register in the hotel office he had written in large, flowing hand, "John L. Brooke, Honolulu, H. I."

However much he might desire to rest quietly, while events shaped themselves, that signature would be sure to betray him, shrieking aloud, as it were, that John Brooke of Honolulu was not killed by falling from a train in the Mott Haven yards, but was still living, a guest at the Hotel Astor, occupying room X108, on the seventh floor, facing Broadway.

The shock of the discovery silenced him for a moment, and then he heard repeated:

"Hello! I say, there is a reporter here to see Mr. Brooke."

For just a second he was tempted to say that Mr. Brooke was not in, but thought better of it immediately.

"All right," he returned, "ask the reporter to come up."

And having given this direction he returned to his breakfast, poured out a second cup of coffee for himself, lighted a cigarette and idly picked up a sheet of one of the newspapers which strewed his bed.

He had no more than folded the paper and started to make a pretense of reading when there came a rather demandful rap upon his door.

Brooke arose and opened it, the paper still in his left hand. A boyish youth, tall and lean, with fair hair and frank blue eyes, confronted him.

"I'm from the Sphere," he said cheerily, by way of introduction. "Is this Mr. Brooke?"

Brooke studied the lad's face for a brief moment, doubtful still as to the better course.

"Yes" he answered at length, and saw his air castles toppling as he did so.

The young reporter smiled affably, which Brooke felt was not exactly the manner he would expect from one who was about to resurrect a dead man; but he held the door wide and waved the visitor in with a movement of his newspaper.

"I've come," began the youth—and again Brooke winced in expectation of the blow—"I've come to get you to tell all about this little affair between gentlemen. I suppose it can be called that, eh? I understand a very large amount of money is involved, and that at present it is in your possession."

**What would you do if you had found a suitcase containing a million dollars in your room? Brooke has yet to find out whether by keeping silence he is plunging himself into a dangerous situation or doing the wisest thing. Now he is confronted by a reporter who has discovered a news element in the circumstance. What will Brooke say—how will he extricate himself? The next Ledger supplies the answers to all these questions—and more!**

### No Appetite.

HE LAY by the roadside, groaning and writhing with pain. A policeman came up and asked him what was tne matter.

"I ate one—I ate one," moaned the sufferer.

The policeman was puzzled at first, but quickly grasped the situation.

"Poison!" he muttered. All poisons have antidotes. Therefore, it was necessary to discover which poison the sufferer had taken in order to administer the right antidote.

"Well, what did you eat?" gently inquired the constable.

"You blithering ass," retorted the sufferer. "I didn't eat anything!"

"Then why did you say 'I ate one?'"

"Because I-81 is the number of the motor that knocked me down, you idiot!" yelled the victim.


# OUCH! SUCH PAIN!

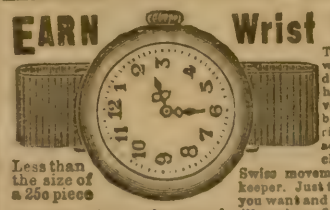
**It Takes You Right in the Back!**

**SOMETIMES IN THE ARM, HIP OR FOOT,**

**It's all due to an over-abundance of that poison called uric acid. The kidneys are not able to get rid of it. Such conditions you can readily overcome, and prolong life by taking Anuric." This can be obtained at almost any drug store, in tablet form.**

LAPORTE, IND.—"I suffered for nearly a year with sciatica. I was unable to work for two months in the spring and about three weeks in the fall. I took electric treatment and several different kinds of medicine but got no relief until I came into possession of a bottle of Doctor Pierce's Anuric (anti-uric-acid) Tablets, which I took in accordance with directions. One week after I started taking Anuric I went back to work in a greatly improved condition, and to-day, no matter what the weather is I have no pain from sciatica, so I will recommend the Anuric Tablets to all who are suffering from rheumatism."—GLEN HINES, 423 Washington Street.

**EARN Wrist Watch**



This fine wrist watch has white dial, gold color hands, nickel silver case. Wrist band black silk ribbon — with adjustable silver clasp. Genuine Swiss movement, good time keeper. Just the wrist watch you want and you can get it for nothing. Just send name and will send you 24 set of Art Pictures to distribute on special offer at 25c each. Send us the $6.00 you collect and for your trouble will send you this genuine Swiss wrist watch, less than the size of a 25c piece, just as described.

Less than the size of a 25c piece

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$40

Used and rebuilt motorcycles, single and twins, $25 to $100. Used bicycles, $5.00; tandems, $10. All machines guaranteed in good working order. New bicycles and motorcycles at Factory prices. You save dealers' profits. Motorcycle and automobile tires too, $3.00. Complete line of parts and supplies.

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Deninger Cycle Co., Rochester, N.Y.

80 Pounds 188 Pounds Latest Photo

# TUBERCULOSIS

It was when physicians said it was impossible for J. M. Miller, Ohio Druggist, to survive the ravages of Tuberculosis, he began experimenting on himself, and discovered the Home Treatment, known as ADDILINE. Anyone with coughs or influenza showing tubercular tendency or Tuberculosis, may use it under plain directions. Send your name and address to

ADDILINE - 198 Arcade Building, - Columbus, Ohio



# 1920 TOURING CAR FREE

To some one who answers this advertisement promptly I will give, absolutely Free, freight and war tax prepaid, a 1920 model, 5-Passenger Touring Car. A brand new car with electric self-starter and lighting system. Would you like to have it?

**Solve Puzzle and Get 2,000 Free Votes**

In the scenery around this car are six hidden faces. Turn the ad upside down and sideways and you will be able to find them. When you find four of the faces, mark each one with an (X) and send the puzzle to me, together with your name and address and I will send you 2,000 Free Votes toward the Automobile and enter you in my Auto Contest. This is the biggest and most liberal contest ever offered, because,

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# The Meter Mystery

(Continued From Page 7)

but I wouldn't accept. Made enough money here as a free lance, and besides, I've had a lot of fun tormenting old Derwent."

"You don't have to accept now," declared Ted. "I have enough for us all and you won't have to potter around with these messy things any more."

"Guess you don't know your old uncle, Teddy. I'm a born chemist, and wouldn't be happy unless I was surrounded by crucibles and test tubes and such like. Let's go home, Ted. I told Mrs. Miggins to have broiled squab in honor of your arrival. I hope they didn't shut off the gas today. They're always experimenting with my meter, for all the good it does 'em. Mrs. M. does get in such a state when she has to start a coal fire and the electric cooker I ordered hasn't arrived yet."

TEDDY spent the next few weeks in surreptitious meetings with Milly, tinkering with gas meters and shadowing his uncle, "all of which seems a most dishonorable way of employing my time," confessed Ted, during one of the stolen interviews with his adored one.

"Can't you coax your uncle into telling you anything?" asked Milly.

"Not a thing!" answered Ted. "He's as close as a clam, but he is open to a sporting proposition. I bet him that if within six weeks, by chance, accident or chemistry, I unearth this secret that so puzzles the experts, he will refrain from further annoying your father."

"That's something, Ted. I feel sure you'll win."

Milly met his eyes with implicit trust and confidence shining in her own.

"Your belief in me almost gives me faith in myself," said Teddy seriously. "Still I mustn't forget that I've been working on this problem for the past three weeks and I don't seem nearer a solution than ever."

Things might have remained at this impossible pass indefinitely if the physicians had not relieved Mr. Derwent in some degree. That gentleman was able to trundle around in a wheeled chair, get in every one's way and make himself generally obnoxious. His convalescence also gave him the opportunity of keeping a watchful eye upon his daughter.

The first time that Milly failed to keep her appointment with Ted that disconsolate young man was thrown into ecstacies later, hearing from her by telephone that each morning thereafter she would ride along the bridle path on the river road at 6 o'clock.

"I know it's a ridiculous hour, Ted, but what can I do?" questioned Milly's silvery tones over the wire. "Dad keeps a watch on me every moment that he's awake now that he knows you've returned to town."

Ted was up betimes next morning, but not before his uncle. The door of Billy Carson's bedroom was wide open and the curtains at the raised windows were flirting with the early breeze. The chemist's well-worn hat and coat were missing from their accustomed pegs in the hall.

"What in the world can Uncle William find to do at his laboratory at such an unearthly hour?" Ted questioned yawningly. "He sure is nuts on chemistry."

Glancing at the clock, Ted realized that he had plenty of time to spare. He made coffee and then with the zest of a healthy appetite, started a forage on the pantry shelves. Mrs. Miggins was a past mistress in the art of preserving apricot jam. This was Ted's pet confection. A search of the pantry failing to materialize this delectable delicacy, Ted went further afield and explored the hanging shelves in the cellar, where rows of neatly labeled jars bore irrefutable evidence of Mrs. Miggins' good housewifery.

The coveted jar in his hand, the young man was about to ascend the cellar stairs when he heard a footstep and the click of the latch of the door above. Not stopping to analyze the impulse that prompted him, Ted swiftly hid beneath the cellar stairs, as his uncle's light footfalls descended the steps. Carson carried an oblong metal box and a flashlight. Little realizing that his every move was being watched, the chemist approached the quarter gas meter, and switching on the flashlight, removed something from the metal box, dropping this something carefully into the slot of the quarter meter. For a brief moment the glow of the electric torch caught scintillating rays gleaming from the tiny object held between the chemist's fingers; then a tinkling click within the coin box and all was over. Ted's heart was beating to suffocation as he crouched beneath the flight of steps which his uncle was now slowly ascending.

"Gee! I hope he doesn't fasten that bolt and lock me down here," worried Ted, straining every nerve to listen. Only the latch fell into place. The forgotten jar of jam still tightly clutched in his nervous fingers, Ted dashed to the gas meter. Minute as his inspection was it gave no clew.

"I must get hold of that box—but how?" Suddenly an idea flashed thru his mind. "It's a chance in a thousand, but it may work."

HE CAUTIOUSLY ascended the stairs and listened. He heard his uncle talking caressingly to the pet cat in the hall; then the soft pad of light footfalls mounting the front stairway to the second floor.

In a moment Ted was out of the house by way of the back door and around the corner in the street. The stores and all places where he could locate a telephone were closed at this early hour, and Ted found himself and his plan up against a stone wall. A passing milkman eyed him curiously. Ted placed his hands in his pockets and tried to appear nonchalant.

Suddenly he exclaimed, "The very thing!" and dashed off down the street like one possessed.

Since gaining his inheritance, Ted had put some of his ready money to use by purchasing an interest in the evening newspaper on which he previously had been employed, and had been presented duly with a key to the office.

The discovery of this key in his pocket was the solution of his present dilemma. The newspaper office was near by and it was only a moment's work to open the door and call up his uncle's number. It seemed ages before he heard the well-known tones answering his impatient summons. Breathless and excited, Ted's voice needed little disguising, but assuming a high falsetto he piped, "Your laboratory's burning something fierce, Mr. Carson! I just called up the firehouse. You'd better hurry!"

Quickly cutting the connection, so as not to have to answer embarrassing questions, Ted cautiously returned homeward, watching from a point of vantage until he saw his uncle's fleeing figure disappearing in the direction of the laboratory.

"If he's locked his door," thought Ted, "I can get in thru the open window from the porch roof. If only he didn't take that box with him!"

Ted gained his uncle's room in record time and found the door ajar as the chemist had left it when he had been summoned to the telephone in the hall downstairs.

"Seems less dishonorable than climbing in thru windows," chuckled Ted. "Now for uncle's mysterious box."

Ted hurriedly examined the disordered piles of papers, magazines and bottles that littered the over-crowded room. Failing to find the desired object, he started in on a more methodical search, but his efforts went unrewarded. He had almost arrived at the conclusion that his uncle had taken the box with him, when a brisk breeze caught the folds of a curtain draped across a bookcase near the open window. As the wind flirted with the drapery, the rays of the morning sun focused themselves upon a metal box securely wedged between two volumes on the bookcase shelf.

Eagerly Ted snatched the box. For a moment he fumbled awkwardly at its intricate fastenings, then succeeding in releasing the opening spring, he fingered its contents with caution and growing wonder. Suddenly realizing exactly the consistency of the article he was handling, he burst into hearty, if repressed, peals of laughter.

"The old fox," he exclaimed, replacing the box and making his exit.

Milly made a piquantly pretty picture in her riding costume, crooning caressingly to her pet horse, as she affected to ignore the arrival of her tardy sweetheart. Exuberantly he seized her hands in his, while his excited apologies tumbled over each other in broken, breathless sentences.

"I've had Gypsy Queen trotting up and down this bridle path for over an hour," Milly poutingly informed the incoherent young man.

"It's all right, Milly dear," rapturously from Ted. "Just think! "I've found it! Isn't that great?" Teddy gave her a bearlike hug.

"Teddy! Behave! Suppose some one should see!"

For answer Teddy gave her another embrace.

"But what have you found? Tell me; I can't wait. I'm just as excited as you."

"At what time does your dad make his morning appearance?" Without waiting for an answer, Ted went on, "I think I've got your father and my uncle where they'll have to listen to reason."

"Oh, Ted!" pleadingly, "tell me, won't you?"

"Be patient, sweetheart; I'll spring the big surprise in just about an hour from now."

"Then I'm off, and if you want to see dad at the earliest opportunity you had better accept my invitation to breakfast."

Ted watched Milly out of sight, remarking to himself, "Now for an interview with my respected uncle and then to beard the lion in his den at the Derwent home."

"Well, well, Ted; what are you doing


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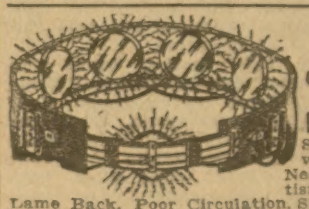

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out so early?" asked the chemist, as his nephew entered the laboratory a little later.

"I might ask you the same question, uncle," answered Ted, his busy glances scrutinizing every corner of the workshop.

"Some silly fool called me up at home and said the laboratory was on fire. There was nothing to it, tho. Kinda queer, it seems to me."

"Some one having a joke at your expense, probably," laughed Ted. "By the way, I'm invited to the Derwent home for breakfast. Guess I'll ask her father for Milly and see what he says."

"Too bad to put old Derwent in a passion so early in the day," grinned Carson.

"Perhaps when he learns that you are solemnly pledged not to annoy him in future, he may give his consent," remarked Ted quietly.

"Now what nonsense have you got into your head?" queried Carson.

Without immediately replying, Ted strolled around the laboratory, casually inspecting the different contrivances his uncle had perfected in order to aid him in his loved profession.

"You laugh at chance, uncle, don't you? Say it has no place in chemistry. Probably you're right, but chance has been good to me."

"H'm! What is the boy driving at?" Carson removed his spectacles and started polishing them, in his case, an unfailing sign of agitation.

"Nice little refrigerating plant you have here, uncle," Ted continued. "Complete in every detail I should say. Just for the sake of supposition, we'll say that you have certain tiny molds made exactly in the size and shape of 25 cent pieces. These molds, when filled with water and put thru refrigerating process, would naturally form discs resembling quarters so perfectly that when dropped into the slots of quarter meter coin boxes, these ingeniously-constructed pieces of ice would release the flow of gas, doing the work of the more valuable discs of silver. Unlike the coins they represented, the ice discs would presently melt into water and the small amount of fluid resulting therefrom would quickly evaporate. How does that strike you as a solution of this puzzling problem, Uncle Billy?"

The chemist had dropped into a nearby chair, his mouth agape in amazement. Presently he found speech.

"Can't imagine how you discovered this, Ted! I'm glad it was one of my family, tho, and not Derwent's chuckle-headed experts. Do you know, there's been slot machine experts here from all over the country, and not one of them tumbled to my trick."

The old man chuckled and the humorous twinkle was resurrected in his shrewd, blue eyes. "Wait a minute, boy," he continued.

Carson twisted the combination of the safe that held the copies of so many valuable formulas, and after fumbling amongst some papers, gave Ted a legal-looking document.

"Take that as a wedding gift for you and Milly," he said. "That paper will do more toward gaining old Derwent's consent than anything in the world."

Carson turned to his rickety desk and commenced a scrawling letter.

"Why, Uncle William, if this isn't the deed to this very plot of ground! Made out to me, too! How can I thank you?"

"Don't waste time in thanks. Take that and get it recorded before I change my mind. It's made out all legal, signed, sealed and everything."

"Uncle William, you're a brick!" exclaimed the young man, leaning over the stooping shoulders in affectionate manner.

"Can't you see I'm busy writing?" testily from the old man.

"Too busy to accept my thanks, Uncle William?"

"I should say so! This is a letter accepting the offer made by the Tullerton people. Could never trust myself in the same town with old Jim Derwent without doing something to rile him, and that would be breaking my promise to you, wouldn't it?"

# The Riddle of the Flying Hands

(Continued From Page 12)

too. Perhaps we can work to mutual benefit."

THE youth was greatly taken back. But his astonishment soon gave place to apprehension and he begged that Louise Gem's name in no way be made public property.

"She is the dearest girl you can imagine," he said. "And I wouldn't have her name become public property for the world."

"Her mother doesn't favor you."

"No—nor does my father favor her. It is hard for us for a little while yet—but not for long. When I become of age, next month, I come into my own fortune."

"Tell us," queried Sheffield. "Why did you happen to think that this Mr. Simpson broke into their apartment this morning?"

Young Algers plucked at his cap for a moment. "Well," he said, finally, "Louise leaves a letter for me in their mailbox every night before she retires. She has given me a key for the box and—er—I call for my letter and leave one for her. I always do this pretty late in the night. Well, as I came out, and looked up at her window, the light in her room suddenly lighted and I heard Louise scream. Then a man—or a shadow of a man, he was so gaunt—slid out of the vestibule of the house and down the street, with the least exertion and greatest speed I have ever seen displayed. And with all my athletics, I could not keep up with him. But I did manage to keep him in sight, on and off cars for an hour, and when he got just about at this corner, he absolutely disappeared. At first I thought he had actually slipped into a grave in that cemetery——"

Mrs. Kelly hereupon nodded her head knowingly.

"——but then I saw a light in that barred window across the hall. And at present I would be willing to save the State a boarder if it would not entail dragging Louise's name before the public."

At this moment the doorbell again sounded. It was ten minutes past 6. Mrs. Kelly put her fingers to her lips and left the sitting-room, closing the door after her. The opening of the outer door, a moment's conversation, and the closing and locking up of the door again were heard.

Mrs. Kelly returned to the sitting-room, closing the door after her most carefully.

"It's him," she whispered.

### CHAPTER VI.

IT WAS immediately decided to have an interview with "him."

Following a knock upon it, the door to Mrs. Simpson's room was opened noiselessly by a tall, fleshless man of perhaps 45 years of age. He had the air of an aesthete; it transcended every feature of his dress and manner. His hair was a light brown; his face extremely thin, almost hollow, but with finely molded features and pale, tired blue eyes that showed the whites beneath. He bade his callers enter with a quiet courtesy that was to make their task very difficult.

"He's the man I saw coming out of her house," young Algers breathed to Carter.

"You will pardon our intrusion," Sheffield said, taking the initiative and showing his passports, "when you know it is a matter of relatively great importance that brings us here. People are everywhere being questioned, for there is a citywide catechism in progress. Some have taken it unpleasantly, but the majority have shown a true patriotism in telling whatever they could of themselves and their actions so that we could strengthen our premises."

"I shall be glad to give you any information I have on anything you wish to ask," Mr. Simpson attested.

"Good! Without losing any time, then—what is your occupation? And I should like to have you account for your movements from 12 midnight until 3 o'clock this morning."

Mr. Simpson proceeded upon the two questions with gratifying directness.

"I am an assistant accountant with the Pitkin Accounting Firm of this city. As for my movements: At 12 last night I was sitting in the library car of train No. 3, from Pittsburgh, where I had been sent to go over the books of Rynold, Smith & Co. of that city. At 1 a. m. I was still in the library car. At 1.45 the train pulled in and I alighted. After I had walked a way from the station, I thought I should like to smoke. I had no cigars in my pocket, but I saw a drug store lighted up in the distance. I felt wakeful and in need of stretching my limbs. When I got to the drug store I noticed I was on Hampver avenue. I wondered if I were near the home of a wardfellow of mine at the county hospital. We had both been struck by the same automobile in the latter part of March, and taken to the same ward. He was much more seriously hurt than I—was growing weaker constantly, in fact, when I left the hospital. I happened to come across his name and address in my pocket, night before last, and when I saw I had come to the very street where he had lived, I thought I should like to determine whether he had ever recovered."

"What was this man's name?"

"He gave it to me in confidence, telling me that no one else in the hospital knew who he was. He seemed to fear something. But—the poor fellow is undoubtedly dead now—his name was John Barcole."

"I see. And did you succeed in finding his former place of residence on Hampver avenue?"

"Yes. It was some four or five blocks east—near the park; a beautiful, large apartment building. I went into the entrance and looked over the bell plates, but there was no Barcole there; so I went on, got to a street car and was home by 3 o'clock a. m., I believe."

Mrs. Kelly corroborated it gravely.

"I thank you very kindly," said Sheffield, opening the door and shaking the man's hand, in spite of the fact that he still believed Barcole and Simpson were the same man.

"I am afraid the ghosts have it, Carter," he said, once outside of the house. "I should almost believe that Simpson himself were the ghost, but for the fact that his fingerprints are different from our ghostly ones of the wall papers. I have already assured myself—short tho the excursions have been to and within this house—that the bars and windows have not been tampered with, that the floorings, walls and ceilings are intact, that the bulldog is non-approachable and Mrs. Kelly irreproachable. In fine, Carter, I am afraid now"—his voice grew quizzical——"we are dealing with the dead; that we should not find that handprint if we took every human being's impression, yellow and white, on this planet. In fact, it is up to the dead London Johnnie. I am in earnest. Our wall-paper prints show the fingerprints of a dead man. Why, did you notice that neither Mrs. Gem or her daughter saw anything but a ghastly pair of hands? Come—it's getting dark. Let us dig up the grave. X 206 I think the clerk said."

CARTER was used to Josman Sheffield's vagaries, but he now thought he saw strange lines of relationship between his present "aberration" and his late increasingly nervous state.

"We shall dig up his grave, Carter. Ah! Here is Mrs. Kelly now, with the spade and the lamp and the blotting-paper. Thank you, Mrs. Kelly—and the pins? Ah! a whole paper of them! This will make a capital dark-lantern. We shall want to return shortly without ringing the bell."

"This young gentleman and I will be watching at the window for you," she assured the men, scarcely breathing.

As soon as the door was closed, Carter started the most profound tirade in whispers against Sheffield's proposed actions. A tirade which only shivered to fragments against the stone wall of his companion's silence. The latter tiptoed around the sitting-room side of the cottage and into the small cemetery at the rear. Carter watched from a distance the indistinct form of his friend, who dug up the earth in what appeared to be a recently made grave, lighted now and meagerly by the improvised dark-lantern. The soft shovelfulls fell noiselessly to the side. The rhythm of motion was ghastly. It was many minutes before it ceased. Then Sheffield came toward the little gate where Carter stood.

"Are you too chicken-hearted to bear me witness?" he demanded. "I find the lid off; the glass exposed and tilted. Come and see."

Carter could only follow.

"My dear friend," said Josman, feelingly, "I thank you. It is as ghastly—as sacrilegious to me as to you. But it is not we, you'll admit, who have torn the lid and cover away. Look! The hands are gone. Johnnie Corp's hands are missing. That's all, Carter. Now, let us return to Mr. Simpson."

But Sheffield paused as he finished this sentence, bowed his head in profound silence and remained thus for a full minute. Then he led the way back to the house.

But when they got back to the house they found a scene had been taking place during their absence. Coleman Algers held an aimless gun, while the dog battled with Mr. Simpson, snarling and biting with death menace. Mrs. Kelly lay upon the floor unconscious. Carter seized a gun and beat upon the beast with the butt of it, while Sheffield jumped off to one corner, covering Simpson.

The dog was soon reduced to a point where he crept whiningly away.

"First hand over those corpse-skin gloves that you tanned," Sheffield dictated. Mr. Simpson reluctantly produced from an inner pocket a pair of yellow coverings—coverings of thick but flexible human skin—that laced down the backs of the hands and fingers.

"And so, Mr. Simpson, ex-Barcole, ex-Rainee, you thought that dead London Johnnie could carry a few more tricks to his debit, and that his burial in this obscure little cemetery directly in back of you would give you the golden opportunity of securing that clever device of a pair of human skin gloves—gloves that we thought for a long time were the hands of some Jap who was trying to get the stolen plans of the Boyle Rapid Firer! I arrest you, not for desecration of a grave; not for attempted murder; but for the theft of the Boyle Rapid Firer plans, which you stole when you worked as John Rainee, draughtsman, in the Government arsenal at Rock Island. You realized, didn't you, old man, that if you went back to the flat after your recovery from the automobile accident and asked permission to dig back in the wall for your private possessions, they'd have suspected something crooked. And that was why you dropped in, in the dead of night, with your old latchkey, hands all nicely laced in Johnnie Corp's whorls and deltas. You knew you were the only former occupant of the apartment; that you had been employed at the Government arsenal. These were incriminating facts, were you to be picked up in this affair. You knew that if you wore—say—rubber gloves, and turned the finger of suspicion away from you, it would be waving about in the air and likely to fasten upon you again. But if you could make it point directly at an internationally famous crook—who was dead—what then?"

Sheffield's eyes glittered.

"It would be the cleverest revenge ever devised against the fingerprint experts who for seven years running have refused to adopt your 'Rainee System of Fingerprint Cataloging.' You would place a flaw in the fingerprint system because of your consuming hatred for the clan who pointed out the flaws in your own successive treatises on it.

"But you didn't get away with it. And as for your saffron customer for the Rapid Firer plans—he will have to lick his chops a while longer. Call a taxi, Carter."

# The Carnival Puzzle

(Continued From Page 2)

dead in here." She shuddered at the recollection. "I am pos'tive it has not been touched since."

"Very well, then; anything in the basket has been put there since the morning before the murder?"

"Yes, sir. I'm pos'tive."

"Was any one in here, besides the lodger, the day before the crime?"

"No, sir. I'll swear to that."

"I thank you, Nora." He beamed upon her reassuringly. "Evans, call Mrs. Moran."

The landlady, as ever "scant of breath," climbed the stairs with her usual respiratory difficulties. She corroborated to the letter the statements of Nora.

When the two women were gone Evans exclaimed, "For the love of Mike, what did you find in that basket?"

Curiosity amused Gale.

"A bit of paper." He handed it to his assistant with a mocking flourish.

Upon its rumpled surface Evans found—the three numbers and the three letters.

He read aloud.

"139 Sal."

Then he looked curiously at John Gale; but checked himself, and did not speak what was in his mind.

GALE drew a cigar from his pocket and deftly cut the tip.

"No doubt, Evans, you have often thought of the importance of numbers." He paused reflectively. "It is a science in itself—the science of enumeration."

Again he lapsed into mediation.

Evans waited patiently.

Gale flecked a bit of ash from his sleeve. Suddenly he straightened. "Here we have three numbers and we have three letters. Evans, be natural and be prompt. What do they stand for? Quick!"

"Telephone call."

"Good, but wrong. So would answer nine people out of ten, depending on the habit and recency of their associations. But in noting a telephone number one writes the exchange first. A directory will confirm my judgment, I think. Try again."

"Street address?"

"Good again. But would you not expect some abbreviation like St. or Ave.?"

Evans was indisposed to make a third essay.

"Numbers are used chiefly for three purposes: You have obliged me with illustrations for two of these. Thru a number the operator is enabled to select or identify the proper connection. This is enumeration to establish identity. The street address illustrates enumeration to establish location. By it one knows where to find the house."

"Your third class?"

"The catalog."

Evans shook his head. "There are all sorts of catalogs. 139 Sal. might be a phonograph record or a mail order number. It might be most anything. That will not get us very far."

"Fortunately we have two details that will aid us greatly. Of course, we all suspect Mrs. Moran's renter. I believe we may assume a connection between him and this scrap of paper. Now, do you recall the descriptions of this man?"

"Only that no two tallied."

"Ah, there is the point. They differed except in certain details. The gatekeeper, Mrs. Moran, the lodger, agreed on some things. He was 'stoop-shouldered, 'round-shouldered,' 'near-sighted.' Do these adjectives suggest the type of catalog to which we may assign '139 Sal?'"

Evans began to see the light.

"My idea is spported by what I remember of the fingerprints shown me by the Deputy Superintendent. The long fingers with corresponding spatial divisions between the joints, their thinness and tendency toward the bony structure, speak to me of the 'Hamlet' type—brood-

ing, studious, preferring to think, rather than to do; yet, upon occasion, acting with impulsive rashness."

Evans now grasped the possible meaning of the three numbers and the three letters. He exclaimed:

"We may find the solution in a book catalog!"

Gale nodded.

"Our next move is to the Public Library."

THEY went at once to the card indexes.

"I feel like one of those college fellows," laughed Evans, "working up his—what do you call 'em—thesis."

Gale's eyes twinkled.

"We are testing out the Pythagorean theories of numbers," he said solemnly.

It was no easy matter to find that for which they sought. There were a dozen writers whose names began with the three letters "Sal." These varied in productivity; some with but a single volume to their credit, others with many more. In the reading-room each drew a certain number of the books. In each one they examined page 139. They searched and studied in this manner for upwards of an hour before Evans beckoned to his chief.

The book was "Crimes of Medieval Italy," by Guldo Salvini. On page 139 they read the following:

"They remained at supper until an advanced hour of the night, when the one brother took his departure attended only by a mysterious man in a black mask. Nor was he ever heard of after; neither he, nor that late-comer to the banquet."

"Romantic rot," said Evans.

"But suggestive rot," answered Gale. "We are on the right track."

"You mean——"

"The right mind and the wrong idea give up the criminal deed. And note this."

On the white margin soiled hands had left a thumb-print.

The assistant's eyes opened wide.

"One thing more, Evans. After page 139 the leaves are uncut."

"Showing——"

"Probably there's been but a single reader. It's a rare book."

They made inquiries at the desk.

The assistant librarian looked thoughtfully at the interesting little volume. "It has been drawn quite regularly by an individual whom I have observed particulary—a stoop-shouldered fellow, quite nearsighted. The book is a new one, rather rare. He was the only one to call for it. About a week ago he ceased coming, but last Thursday I noticed he had resumed his readings. Usually he sits at that table."

"Does he come at any special time?"

"Yes, he ought to be along pretty soon now."

Gale smiled grimly.

JOHN LINCI was a man with a grievance. To begin with, he had hoped, because of his weak eyes, to dodge the draft. The exemption board shoved him thru. In camp, because he whined and shirked, he was unpopular. The overseas privations filled him with bitterness. He cared little what became of America and civilization. It was the last straw, when that impudent "kid"

# CLASSIFIED WANT ADS

**Information—** The rate for one insertion in The Saturday Blade and one insertion in the Chicago Ledger is 35 cents a word, minimum 14 words, less 3% for cash. Each initial and group of figures is counted as a word, and the name and address are also counted. This is the minimum rate; neither more nor less is charged, irrespective of size or number of insertions. An ad may appear in both publications of the same week, or in the Blade of one week and the Ledger of the next.

W. D. BOYCE CO., Publisher, 500-514 N. Dearborn St., CHICAGO.

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**SELL WHAT MILLIONS WANT. NEW,** wonderful Liberty portraits—Creates tremendous interest—Absolutely different—Unique. Enormous demand—30 hours' service. Liberal credit. Outfit and catalogue free. $100 weekly profit easy. Consolidated Portrait Co., Dept. 12, 1036 W. Adams St., Chicago.

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**WE START YOU IN BUSINESS, FURNISH**ing everything; men and women, $30.00 to $100.00 weekly operating our "New System Specialty Candy Factories" anywhere. Opportunity lifetime; booklet free. Z. Ragsdale Co., East Orange, N. J.

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**SELL INSYDE TYRES, GENUINE INNER** armor for auto tires; double mileage; prevents punctures and blowouts; tremendous demand. American Accessories Company, Dept. 126, Cincinnati, Ohio.

**AGENTS—WIRELESS UMBRELLA.** Something brand new. Costs no more than ordinary kind. Biggest seller ever introduced. Write quick for agency. Parker Mfg. Co., 309 Dike St., Dayton, Ohio.

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**$11.00 A DAY FOR 5 HOURS WORK.** New Method—no capital required—no deliveries—no delays—just take orders and bank big profits. Davis Products Co., Dept. 461, Chicago.

**AGENTS—HUSTLERS EARN $50.00 WEEK** and their own clothes free selling our famous popular priced suits to consumer; outfits free. Central Tailors, Dept. 3, 219 So. Dearborn, Chicago.

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**AGENTS—OUR SOAP AND TOILET AR**ticle plan is a wonder. Get our free sample case offer. Ho-Ro-Co., 125 Locust, St. Louis.

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**YOUR GOVERNMENT WANTS HUNDREDS** railway mail clerks—men—women over 17, $1,600-$2,300 year. List positions open—free. Write immediately. Franklin Institute, Dept. A 29, Rochester, N. Y.

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**MEN AND WOMEN MAKE $25 TO $150.00** per week any locality. No mail order or agency proposition. No capital needed. Wentt Mail Order Service, 3214 Normal Ave., Chicago.

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**RAILWAY TRAFFIC INSPECTORS EARN** from $110 to $200 per month and expenses. Travel if desired. Unlimited advancement. No age limit. We train you. Positions furnished under guarantee. Write for booklet CM-12, Standard Business Training Institute, Buffalo, N. Y.

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**BE A DETECTIVE $50-$100 WEEKLY;** travel over world; experience unnecessary. American Detective Agency, 300 Lucas, St. Louis.

**DETECTIVES EARN BIG MONEY. TRAVEL.** Great demand. We train you. Particulars free. Write American Detective System, 1968 Broadway, New York.

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**BE A DETECTIVE. EXCELLENT OPPOR**tunity, good pay, travel. Write C. T. Ludwig, 320 Westover Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

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PERSONAL

## PHOTOGRAPHY

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DOGS ome, Ltv

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**UNDERGROUND TREASURES—HOW AND** where to find them; particulars for 2c. Model Co., Morton Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

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## PERSONAL

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**PROSPERITY, HAPPINESS, ARE WITHIN** your reach. Many wealthy, congenial people desire early marriage. My system most successful. Descriptions free. Mrs. E. Budd, Box 753, San Francisco, Calif.

## PERSONAL—(Continued)

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Size..... .....Color.....

Name.....

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| 32 x 3½ | 9.00 | 2.50 |
| 31 x 4 | 9.40 | 2.75 |
| 32 x 4 | 10.00 | 3.00 |
| 33 x 4 | 11.00 | 3.25 |
| 34 x 4 | 11.00 | 3.50 |
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These tires are practically new, some have run less than 100 miles. All are standard makes. Tubes are brand new fresh stock. 25,000 Travilla Tire users get 6,000 to 10,000 miles of service. A trial order will make you a steady customer. Tires shipped out of town subject to examination. Send no money. When ordering specify clincher or straight side. Be convinced—send orders AT ONCE.

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TEXOIL REFINING COMPANY,
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# U. S. OFFICERS' DRESS SHOE

Every Pair Inspected

Munson last, $12.00 value, made of finest selected leather uppers, double thick solid leather soles, dirt proof tongue. Pay on arrival.

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Postage Free

SEND NO MONEY

Mail Coupon To-day to RELIABLE MAIL ORDER CO., Dept B.L., 25 Huntington Ave., Boston 17, Mass.

Send....pairs. I'll pay postman on arrival—my money back if I want it.

Name ..... Size ....

Address .....

captain, ten years younger than himself, had ordered him, for a petty offense, to be "treated rough." That burned into his soul and kindled the passion for revenge.

We hear ugly stories of privates trying to kill their officers in battle. Linci did that. We have heard of threats made on the homeward voyage. Linci so threatened.

Thruout the summer he nursed his hatred. One day he was reading in the library a sinister tale of revenge and murder. He thought of the Carnival at Riverview. From a "buddy" who knew Bob Jamison he learned that Captain Morley was to attend it and to go in mask. It was then that the idea had come to him in a flash. He read no further.

His plan had worked well. His chance had come at that moment when Morley had left his companions. It was a wild tale that he had told him—a "sob" story of a dying soldier wishing to bid farewell to his captain. Morley had fallen for it. He gloated over the recollection.

"Yes, it had gone well. He felt secure. He had left no clew. At the lodging he had gone thru his pockets to make sure there was no handkerchief, no letter with his name or initial that might in any way incriminate him. He had found only a little scribbled bit of paper, which he remembered throwing into a basket standing near the bed.

Military training had not taken the stoop from Linci's shoulders for long. He seemed more bent than ever as he slunk into the reading-room, glancing furtively at the people about the tables.

Omnivorous reader that he was, he went at once to the desk and reached for a yellow slip to draw out books. Gale and Evans were waiting. The assistant librarian looked at them questioningly.

With a curious smile, Gale thrust forward the book of Salvini.

Linci went white.

But Gale only remarked sweetly:

"You make too many slips, my friend."

SUCH is the story of how John Gale, by the three numbers and the three letters found the man who murdered Capt. Stephen Morley on the night of the Carnival at Riverview.

# THE HEIGHTS

## By A Maria Crawford

"I THINK that Annette is getting to be positively fanatical about her religion. The idea of dragging the members of her sewing club down to the church this afternoon to hear a mountain missionary talk instead of having the usual fun at the home of some of us," scolded Rebecca Frazier. "It is all right to have a fixed belief and try to live up to it, but to wish it off on a crowd of young girls who want all the fun that is coming to them is ridiculous. I started to make a good excuse and stay away, but you know how it is. Everything that Annette asks us to do we manage somehow to try to do. I think that she has a sort of hypnotic influence over all of us."

"No," said Mabel Miller, as they went up the church steps, "that isn't it. Each of us, down in our heart, believes in Annette's sincerity of purpose. She is worth while. She is my ideal girl, and I really love her so that it is a pleasure to me to do anything that she asks me to do."

"Well, I must confess that I would prefer our usual weekly meeting, full of gossipy chatter, instead of being cooped up in a church hearing some long-haired man quote the Bible and with a holier-than-thou expression tell us we ought to go into the mountains and save the moonshiners," laughed Rebecca with the light-hearted indifference of the average spoiled girl.

Once inside, Rebecca led the way to the last row of chairs in the room. "We can sneak out if it's too much of a bore," she whispered just as Annette, smiling radiantly, bore down upon them with a word of cheery greeting.

The minister of the church introduced the speaker, who was a handsome young fellow with wide blue eyes and a winning personality that surprised the group of girls into profound silence.

"I am not going into details about the life of an average mountaineer," he said. "I am not going to try to work on your sympathies with word pictures of their ignorance, their hunger both of mind and body, of their thankfulness for the message that carries hope and promise of better things for the first time into their narrow, cramped existence. Men look at me and speak of the sacrifice that I am making, of the colorless life that I must necessarily lead, of the pleasures of congenial surroundings and the opportunities of cities which I must forego. They never stop to think that up there in the cloud-wreathed mountains I am living on the heights in more respects than one. There 'I am face to face with the stars and with God!'

"The bickerings, the pettiness of everyday misunderstandings in a crowded community, the greed for gold, for position, for power, all these things are very remote from the heights on which we dwell. There is an appalling amount of ignorance of spiritual as well as physical laws. There is grim poverty, in its direst form, stalking from cabin to cabin. They have no vision and 'where there is no vision the people perish.'"

There was much more of it. The boy who had dedicated his life to the service of his fellow men could not fail to impress the group of women and girls in the church.

Rebecca was very quiet as the members of her sewing club followed Annette into the ladies' parlors, where they had been asked for a cup of tea. The young missionary was boyishly interested in everybody there especially the young girls. On the platform, he had been an apostle with a burning message. In the parlor, a plate held rather awkwardly in one big hand, he was just a happy, lovable fellow, laughing companionably with the girls. Rebecca's snappy black eyes, raven hair and scarlet lips seemed to attract him most of all.

On the way home Rebecca linked her arm in Annette's and walked along thoughtfully. Finally she ventured: "Don't you think our club could adopt a mountain girl and educate her? At our weekly meetings we could sew for her, make her nice, substantial ginghams and occasionally hend her a frill or two that would not look out of place where she lives. I never had the truth driven home to me until today that because of my self-centered way of living, because of my indifference, somebody may perish. It made me so—so ashamed."

Annette patted her arm affectionately. "That's a fine idea, Rebecca, about adopting a girl. Such a small part of our allowances would educate a girl in the mountains, and when she finishes school she could go back and be a teacher."

"And maybe the young missionary would fall in love with her and marry her," suggested Mabel Miller. "Wouldn't that be romantic, girls?"

All of the girls exclaimed over such a possibility, all of them except Rebecca. She said nothing at all.

"We've heard so much serious talk this afternoon, girls, let's go to the movies tonight and have a gay time! What do you say? We can get Annette's mother to chaperone us."

Everybody agreed to that. It was at Rebecca's gate that the startling announcement was made. "I can't go with you tonight. I'll see you tomorrow," promised Rebecca.

"Why can't you go, I wonder!" demanded Mabel Miller. "You told me on the way to the church that you didn't have a date."

"But I—I've made one since I told you that," confessed the blushing girl.

"O, Becky, dear, to think of you entertaining a mountain missionary!"

"He is a graduate of Harvard. He could have been a lawyer or—or anything he chose. I think it's wonderful to do what he is doing," said the gay and irresponsible Rebecca, proudly.

Annette put her hands understandingly over Rebecca's, for in the girl's black eyes she saw the hint of tears. The young missionary was to have his romance sooner than they dreamed.

* * *

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TRADE was bad with the timber merchant, and he was sitting in his office musing gloomily over the outlook, when there entered a well-dressed man with a quiet, thoughtful face.

"Do you sell beechwood?" he asked, bluntly.

"I do, sir," replied the merchant, rising with alacrity from his seat, and hoping devoutly for a large order. "We can supply it on the shortest notice, either in the log or the plank."

He began to rummage thru the papers on his desk for a price list; but the quiet man stopped him.

"Oh, I don't want as much as that," he said. "I only need a bit to make a fiddle-bridge."


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